THE

ENGLISHMAN.

Anfapur Prayak 1827

A Novel.

936

IN SIX VOLUMES.

BY

MISS BYRON,

AUTHOR OF THE ENGLISHWOMAN; HOURS OF AFFLUENCE AND DAYS OF INDIGENCE; MODERN VILLA AND ANCIENT CASTLE, &c. &c.

My affections
Are then most humble; I've no ambition
To see a goodlier man.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

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CHAP. I.

"All impediments in Fancy's course
Are motives of mere fancy."

THIS allusion is not merely poetical; it applies generally, from the speculator in worldly dross, whose fancy sublimates at the idea of gold, and in blissful anticipation calculates his gains, to him who, from the inexhaustible mine of pure benevolence, becomes an architect in charity, raises structures which bless his *present* hours, by making himself the voluntary treasure of sorrows, which, perhaps, make his terrestrial abode less cheerful, but ul-

timately add to the perfection of *that* home, to which the good man looks forward with hope, while he trusts he shall inhabit one of the " many mansions" prepared for the unerring.

" An Englishman, a young independent Englishman," says my readers, " a man with power to purchase happiness in any of the thousand ways in which it is offered to the taste of the voluptuous, to pourtray *such* a man, ' going about to do good,' in place of ' seeking whom he might devour,' is offering a picture to the fancies of the young, for which they cannot, perhaps, find a likeness." Yet, with all the courage of an opinionated artist, I press my portrait on their notice; I will not be deterred from my attempt; they may (and my doom may not be distant) they may consign my picture to oblivion; or, what is equally to be dreaded, they may give me over to the reviewers; and then, alas! what will then avail the purity of my intentions, the simplicity with which I mixed

ed my colours, or the *indifference* with which I shall meet their censure, while I feel that *virtue* need not blush to recognise my picture? Yet praise is grateful to my heart; and for the favours already conferred upon me by those hardy censors, I here offer my thanks.

The Morning Post had been scanned by our hero; he had ascertained the correctness of the advertisement, and was contemplating in idea the happiest result from its insertion, when, on turning the paper, a long and pompous detail of lady Morbury's party met his eye—he glanced over the characters; but though the lovely Mrs. Marnley was named as "resplendantly attired with jewels, that shone dimly on a *person* so conspicuously handsome," no mention was made of her companion.—"What seductive flattery to a mind like her's!" said Sidney, mentally; "how Folly ever marks out her favourites!" Again he referred to the paper, which confirmed his surmise of lord Arlingham's having per-

sonated the Magician. The Apollo, Momus, and the Crier, though mentioned with many encomiums, were not specified by name. Lady John Nugent's elegant person, as Minerva, was duly commended. The lawyer was supposed to be lord Osterly, a young nobleman of very superior talents. "Superior talents!" echoed Wentworth; "how absurd is the term! I should hate to be thus blazoned as a mummer." Nor did the character said to be supported by his lordship deserve any particular comment.

Sidney cast the paper on one side, when the billet of Mrs. Marnley again caught his eye; on reperusing it, the half-implied communication stood confest; it was her companion to whom she alluded, when she named her new arrangement. Her decorum, in such a decision, might have been more worthy of praise, had her conduct towards the engaged party been more feminine.

Wentworth, whose fancy was glowing,

retraced

retraced the scene of the preceding night; and though the *poet* had sanctioned the belief, that " man, dressed in authority, was a pompous animal," he, with the discrimination of an enthusiast, pronounced *authority* to be the most indecorous tone a *woman* could assume. It is true, he somewhat perverted the conduct of Mrs. Marnley, or rather he dissected her manner, with a scrupulosity which few characters will bear; and the sum total, after all his reviling, amounted to this conclusion—" It was unfeminine;"—" And that," said Sidney, " neither riches, beauty, nor wit, can counterbalance." The very idea of owning the blissful power to protect a fellow-creature, in any circumstances of life, should *exalt* the mind; but when we shield a superior mind from the storms of adversity, how invaluable is the privilege! what gratitude should mix in our feelings!

These ruminations were interrupted by the entrance of Hall, who announced sir Charles Felton and captain Lennard.

"How are you, Wentworth?" said the baronet, as he extended his hand to our hero; "tell me, Sidney, are we rivals, as my giddy coz would insinuate?"

"Mere *badinage*," replied Wentworth; "lady Anna has such happy spirits, and I was unfortunately so out of tone last night, that I could not parry her raillery; but have *you* made your confession this morning?"

"I have; and she is so disposed to compassionate me, that she is actually setting out on an expedition of inquiry, from which she bids me to expect the happiest result, as it depends upon female curiosity, a never-failing talent when judiciously employed. Behold," continued the lively sir Charles, "how this hardy tar is discomforted (pointing at Lennard). I really believe he is jealous of me; the niggard grudges even those proofs of undisguised affection which our relative connexion sanctions. Be at peace, Ned; she is all your own."

"I wish I dared hope as much," replied

Lennard;

Lennard; "yet I own that her vivacity does sometimes give me pain."

"You sailors are peremptory beings," interjoined Wentworth; "discipline is so natural to you, you are so much habituated to command, that you actually would train even the smiles and graces of your mistress to your imperious system."

"When they require training," resumed Lennard, "I should fear that I had got into wrong soundings; but I see you have been reading the Post—lord Arlingham was the splenetic Magician."

"I guessed it was him last night," said our hero; "lady Anna's agitation apprized me of it; yet I think you do him injustice. I know him to be proud, and in some respects prejudiced; but he has amenable moments, which might be converted to your advantage."

"Never, Wentworth; he is captious in the extreme; and his pride, to say nothing of its insolence, is of the most repulsive sort."

 "As

"As a family connexion, accept my thanks," said sir Charles, laughing; "but I own the picture just: he never ventures to play off his dignity upon me, for I will not let it pass, and in his heart I know he dislikes me. That is a trifle; Anna is amiable, and I brave his haughty brow for the pleasure of her society, nothing loath to vex the stately don."

"Lennard is arrogant in his love," said Sidney; "nothing can be more unequivocal than the preference lady Anna bestows upon him; and with such a certainty, how can he yield to depression?"

"You talk like a stationary animal," replied the captain; "a walk, even a saunter, brings you within the sphere of your happiness. I traverse a deceitful element, trust my treasure to the care of a despotic and privileged guardian, who reposes on the known duty of his child, who would not deceive him, even though she might acknowledge my claim to her favour."

"Trust to her constancy," said sir Charles, "nor

"nor seek to win her from her duty. I grant the present views of lord Arlingham are foreign to your interest, but I know they will prove futile. Let Fancy gild the future;

> "I hate to see a brave bold fellow sotted,
> Made sour and senseless—turn'd to whey, by love."

"I admire your philosophy," said Lennard; "have you forgotten those peerless eyes so soon? Love, the derision of the affected stoic, is, nowithstanding, the best feeling of our nature; I speak not of its lawless ebullitions; but believe me, Felton, there are few professions which present more genuine emanations of the passion. I have listened with delight to the seaman's ballad at the helm; I have heard the favourite name substituted, in place of that which the song had transmitted to the singer; have heard many an ejaculation addressed to the silent moon, by the pensive midshipman; and attended the hammock of an unconscious sufferer, when the

name of some far distant object has been the only sound his feeble lips have uttered. I admit that the disorderly part of such a community have elicited those vices, and those degrading traits of the passion, which excite one's disgust; but, generally speaking, a sailor's attachment is of a description that rather improves the bold character of his calling, by softening his feelings, without daunting his courage."

"I should like to read your log-book," said sir Charles, "it must be highly interesting; what a logician in the passion are you! but, my dear fellow, though I laugh, I can easily imagine all you say to be strictly just. Make me your agent during your projected voyage; and when you tell your tale to madam Luna, blend *friendship* with your *love;* nor fear that the union will deduce from that feeling which you wish should preponderate."

"Agreed," said Lennard, rising. "I must go remind lady Anna of her promise;" and with a friendly adieu he departed.

"He is a worthy fellow," said sir Charles. "I hate my uncle for his blind prejudice; nothing could be more incautious, than to make a young man of his fine person and amiable qualities his inmate, as I may say, for many years. Anna was his playfellow when a child; and after he chose the profession of a sailor, all his time was passed at lord Arlingham's whenever he came home; thus their attachment was strengthened. I have heard my uncle jocular on the subject of girls being fond of heroes; and now that she is of an age to make a decision, he is ungenerous enough to treat him with indifference, and interdict her seeing him, but as a common friend; yet I know in his heart he esteems him."

"Am I impertinent?" asked Sidney; "how has Fortune used him?"

"Moderately," said the baronet. "Arlingham is his guardian, and has turned his property to advantage; his gallantry has increased his fortune, and the known re-

spectability of his descent makes him in all points an unexceptionable connexion.—But now to the motive of my early visit," continued the baronet. "Lennard breakfasted with me, and in the course of conversation, I learned that you are on visiting terms with Mrs. Marnley: will you introduce me? I have an irresistible inclination to meet that sweet girl whom we saw last night: say, will you frank me?"

Sidney paused; the request was simple, yet he felt a reluctance in complying; he had not intended to call upon Mrs. Marnley; his stay in London would in all probability be short: again, he must make some calls during his sojourn; the Nugents and some others had a right to expect such attention from him; and it would be impossible for him to avoid meeting the widow, even in his perambulations; as such, it might be best to make his bow, with sir Charles at his elbow. The decision appears decked with something of selfishness, or we would say, with a foresight which may

impeach

impeach his gallantry, while his vanity seems sufficiently conspicuous; to such conclusions we might oppose a principle equally objectionable—it was prudence: but as there is a distinct difference in that prudence which takes rise in tenacity for others, rather than fear of ourselves, it would be well not to simplify too much, lest we should cast a shade, where it is always most grateful to trace a perfection.

Wentworth agreed to the proposition of his friend—"You must not betray yourself as the white domino," said he, "for Mrs. Marnley is one who would not overlook your ungracious repartee."

"*Mon Dieu!*" said sir Charles, "I had forgotten that; but trust me—you know we sons of Erin are not much troubled with bashfulness."

Ringing for Hall, he bade him go to the hotel in Bond-street, and wait a few hours, when if a letter addressed agreeably to the initials he named should arrive, he was to return with it immediately. This order, though given

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in the presence of sir Charles, was delivered in a voice which prevented his gathering its purport; he knew the character of his friend, who, with all that vivacity for which his nation is remarkable, would have rallied him without mercy, and might, very probably, by a perusal of the paper, have become in part master of a subject which every principle of delicacy required him to guard.

The two friends sallied forth to Mrs. Marnley's, at whose elegant residence they were welcomed with all that *langueur* of manner which marked the conduct of the widow. She was immensely glad to see Mr. Wentworth; it was a pleasure quite unexpected; hoped his worthy father was well, and that lady Beverly would soon make her appearance; the town was languishing for something new, and she had heard that her ladyship was eminently qualified to lead.

Sidney refuted the assertion; his cousin was a retired woman, one who had not courage

courage or inclination to be conspicuous—"Your friend is a philosopher, sir," said Mrs. Marnley, addressing sir Charles; "really it requires some degree of good-nature to bear with his bluntness."

"It is happy when such eccentric animals are judged with so much leniency," replied sir Charles; "but he is a perfect Englishman—at one moment hyperbolical in his admiration, and in the next plain even to rudeness."

Wentworth, laughing, declared he hoped his *sincerity* could never stand impeached.

Mrs. Marnley blushed, for the *sincerity* of our hero, as applicable to herself, was the most humiliating reflection to which she could revert.

Wentworth saw her confusion; but before he had time to restore her derangement, sir Charles, whose philosophy was somewhat pained by not meeting his fair enslaver, began a lively conversation with the widow.

He spoke of lady Morbury's masquerade:

Mrs.

Mrs. Marnley said it was a stupid assembly: the baronet defended it; he thought it was as good as any private masquerade he had ever attended; he descanted on the characters, and pretending a total ignorance of names, asked her to elucidate for him?

" If you had seen the Post," replied Mrs. Marnley, " it gave a slight sketch of it this morning;" and her vanity increased the bloom which stained her smiling countenance. " That remarkably *tall* figure, habited as Minerva, was lady John Nugent," she resumed; " she always takes pride in making herself conspicuous."

" Treason!" said Wentworth; " I will not hear a breath against lady John; she is a charming woman, one of the best wives and mothers that I know."

" I am not speaking of her *domestic* qualities," replied Mrs. Marnley; " she may be very charming at her fireside, but really, in a party, she is quite inconvenient; I always feel afraid of her."

" I confess," said the baronet, " that

those

those Patagonian ladies are not to my taste. Can you tell me who that *little* divinity was, who had been so ill advised as to decorate her lovely person with so many diamonds? you may remember, she walked about with a female in a black domino, and was persecuted by a Fortune-hunter and white domino."

Our hero stood in silent amaze, as he beheld the *nonchalance* of his friend, thus aiding his secret wishes of discovering the fair stranger.

"Why really—that is, positively I cannot say," said the widow; "there were a great many diamonds worn last night; I was foolishly persuaded to wear mine; and I was excessively sorry afterwards, as it occasioned me to be much annoyed."

"Your humility is invincible," said sir Charles, bowing; "I perceive that I have the honour of addressing the queen of diamonds. I now perfectly recollect your voice, and, in fact, I was in your train; for never had *contrast* struck me so forcibly,

as that of the elegant brilliancy of your habit, opposed to the sombre disguise of your friend. Yet I own I think you were injudicious; some persons *require* such aid—others are eminently attractive without it. It would have been charity to have enlivened your friend, by a few of *your* superfluous ornaments."

"The person you mean is no friend of mine," resumed Mrs. Marnley, with an air of scorn. "I believe I did apprize you, Mr. Wentworth," she continued, turning to our hero, "that I had made an addition to my establishment; I much doubt if it will answer my expectation; but to be sure it is optional on my part; I can release myself from it at any time. I can assure you, sir," and she addressed the baronet, "ornaments are out of question with the person you name; she is a young woman whom I have engaged as a companion. I feel it requisite to have some one with me upon occasion, but am afraid I have made a very ineligible choice."

Sir Charles looked his surprise, for he had taken the sentence in a most comprehensive sense: recovering himself, he, with an affected solicitude, pointed out those traits of character estimable in a confidant; and as they were decidedly those virtues which embellish and dignify woman collectively, he waited her reply with some anxiety.

"Oh, as to her morals, I consider them correct, even to prudery; her temper might by some be called good; but, in my idea, her pride is so insufferable, that it calls upon her employers actually to fashion themselves to her notions of delicacy, in order to spare her feelings, which are infinitely refined; and that, you know, when one pays them for their services, is highly ridiculous: surely, in giving them the advantages of society, of mixing in circles so much above them, in such cases, one is entitled to some consideration."

"I think not," said Wentworth. (Mrs. Marnley stared.) "The woman who engages

gages what is termed a companion, should ascertain her qualifications scrupulously, before she makes her decision. I know no class of women suited for such situations but card-playing spinsters, whose blunted feelings make them incapable of a refined sentiment. You are angry; my remark implies that the office is not what you describe it; nor is it; if there is a degrading rank in life, which fetters the mind, and makes it the most abject of all creatures, it is that of a companion: you say that they are received in circles above them; I assert they are *suffered*, rather than received into society; and I confess myself at a loss to understand how a young woman, possessing mind, can subject herself to degradations so incompatible with that elastic and generous tone of spirits which usually accompany youth."

"You were always eccentric," said Mrs. Marnley, while vexation clouded her brow; "but your defence, though highly eloquent, would be dreadfully subversive of that deference which will ever be claimed by

by those whose rank sanctions their elections, in all matters of convenience."

"I know that property gives superiority," replied Wentworth; "it is one of the perversions which we are called upon to deplore; would to Heaven it enlarged the mind, in place of benumbing its better feelings!"

"You perceive what a theorist he is," said Mrs. Marnley; "I have actually known him to defend a bad cause, with so much romantic enthusiasm, that all the old ladies of a certain sect, that is, your excessively refined sentimentalists, have been won over to his side, and I have been left to laugh at him *solus*. Poor Mr. Marnley, who was by no means addicted to sentiment, used to be wonderfully captivated with what *he* called the honest doctrine of Mr. Wentworth; but I must call it by a far more elevated term—it is the very climax of sentiment; I will say no more."

Sir Charles, who had gained an insight into the real disposition of the lady, was now less

less equal to meet the *empressement* of her address. "He believed Wentworth to be a knight-errant in the cause of beauty; and as Fancy always decorated its imaginary homage, it was probable he was, even now, decking the immediate subject of their debate with charms irresistibly attractive."

"Not I, on my honour," said Sidney; "for so few circumstances would reconcile me to the belief, that mind would attach to so voluntary a slave, that I have not given it a thought."

The baronet looked his vexation; he had hoped to elicit a very contrary reply. Mrs. Marnley unconsciously restored his ruffled temper.

"Cervantes himself could not pourtray a more perfectly doleful countenance," rejoined the widow, laughing; "but give me leave to tell you, sir knight, that the absent fair, who has given you so charming a subject for the display of your oratorical powers, this *lady* has no choice—dependence is her lot; and——"

"She

"She said as much," said Wentworth, in the warmth of his heart; and his face was instantly crimsoned; for he had, by this assertion, acknowledged he knew the party for whom he had been thus strenuous.

"Do you know Miss Sidney," asked Mrs. Marnley, eagerly.

"Not by name," said our hero.

"Then *you* were at lady Morbury's last night," she continued, and a thoughtful glance passed over her brow; "pray can you tell me who the white domino was?"

"The paper did not say," replied our hero, "and I was a stranger to the greater part of the company."

Sir Charles regarded Sidney with an eye that sought explanation; yet he shielded himself under the answer of his friend.

Mrs. Marnley, though mortified by her recent discovery, was yet too proud to betray herself; she eulogized lady Anna Arlingham, and some other females of

known

known rank, reprobated the Crier as a rediculous mask, and was certain it was intended as a satire upon the vanity of some one in the assembly.

"I have some reason for venturing to contradict you," said sir Charles. "Wentworth was correct in saying he did not know the masks; I did—the Crier was a friend of mine."

"Indeed," replied the widow; "then my idea was just. Miss Sidney declared she was a stranger to the whole of the party; and when that troublesome white domino became so excessively intrusive, I own I had my suspicions; but she positively rejected the belief that *she* was the person he sought, was so certain he had mistaken her for some one else, that I really was deceived into her opinion: but I am rejoiced at this discovery; it is absolutely necessary that I should seek into this matter."

Just at this moment a servant handed a note to Mrs. Marnley, who, apologizing to her

her visitors, broke the seal: a smile of sceptic inference passed over her features—" Is she gone?"

" Yes, ma'am," said the servant who waited.

" It is very well," resumed Mrs. Marnley. " Here then is a proof, Mr. Wentworth, that a companion may retain her *independence* of mind. Miss Sidney has taken her departure, on a visit of condolence, as she says; but these decampments are not exactly consistent."

" Certainly not," said Wentworth; " and here my argument holds good; she has apprized you of it, yet that is not sufficient; no, no, they must be *perfect* slaves, or they can never please."

" How do I know that she has actually gone, as she asserts, to a sick friend?"

" How do you judge of other people but by their assertions?" asked our hero.

" How intolerably perverse you are! and that too for a person whom you *say* you do not know."

"How harshly you arraign one, whom you ought to have known before you admitted her into your house!" rejoined Wentworth.

"Well, there is no talking a man into sober reason, who soars so egregiously in the regions of fancy. Will you take your dinner with me? I have a few friends coming whom you know—lady Linburne and Charlotte Macleod. Perhaps sir Charles Felton will honour my little party with his presence."

The gentlemen declined the invitation; they were engaged: and after some infinitely wise admonitions from the half-offended Clara, Sidney and his friend took their leave.

The baronet appeased his doubts of our hero's preknowledge of Miss Sidney.—Wentworth gave the fact without hesitation; and after a few comments on the character of Mrs. Marnley, they separated.

Wentworth pursued his way through Grosvenor-square, purposing to call at the hotel

hotel in Bond-street, in the hope of finding some answer to his advertisement, when, just as he arrived at lady Morbury's door, lady Anna issued forth, and was crossing into the shrubbery which ornaments this square. Sidney offered his arm to her ladyship; he now recollected her promise of giving him information concerning the stranger; and, in this expectation, he continued to be her attendant. Lady Anna placed his gallantry to its right motive, and, with the most provoking vivacity, talked of every thing but that which she knew he desired. At length, with a playful smile, she asked him if he had not had visitors at breakfast that morning?

Sidney explained that sir Charles Felton and captain Lennard had passed an hour with him.

"Poor Charles was quite stupid," she continued; "I have been exerting my talents at inquiry, with little success; at least, my *pic-nic* budget will prove a very

poor meal for a lover, poor as poverty, doubts, and malice can make it."

"Your first position is not irremediable to a generous lover," said Wentworth; "the latter may, if clearly investigated, remove the second; and Felton is not likely to be retarded by difficulties."

"These are the logical conclusions of a lover, I suppose," resumed her ladyship. "Well, first, my aunt premises that the lady in question is a Miss Sidney, whom Mrs. Marnley has engaged as a companion; that she is a well-educated woman, in very bad circumstances, and consequently desirous of protection. Mrs. Marnley, however, has felt her delicacy somewhat alarmed, by the attentions of a young man, who has addressed her companion more than once, at the Opera and other places: the unreserved manner of Miss Sidney upon these occasions, caused Mrs. Marnley to ask an explanation, which the lady instantly gave, saying, the gentleman was a most particu-

lar

lar and esteemed friend; but she withheld his name. Two days since, the stranger attracted the notice of a gentleman in the park, who followed them at a distance; and the widow concludes it was the same person who wore the white domino last night. This I could corroborate," continued her ladyship; "it was Felton: but what has aroused the extreme anger of the fair widow is this—half a dozen of her danglers have besought her to introduce them to her charming *eléve:* such an address naturally excited *her* resentment, and she always replies in a way which degrades the unconscious offender, sufficiently to deter a proud spirit from prosecuting any intention in her favour. Thus much for unconnected beauty, when it falls under the guardianship of a known coquette. I see *you* are off, Wentworth; not one of you have courage to follow up a preference which is not sanctioned by the public voice."

"You do me injustice," replied Sidney;

" I have made no advances towards the lady in question. I saw she was unhappy, and that the marked neglect of the party, of which she made one, gave her uneasiness; I endeavoured to lead her into conversation; she appeared amiable and unaffected; and, perhaps, for I am somewhat romantic, I was classing her with some other superior minds, who groan beneath the world's oppressions."

" What strange ideas to carry into a scene of mirth! do you usually wear a mask while you moralize?"

" It would be a necessary security for a known moralizer," said Wentworth; " for I apprehend his musings would subject him to interruptions. But I have not the presumption to announce myself a moralist; I am a mere creature of fancy; my structures are frequently levelled with the earth: yet I begin again, and shall do so, while health gives wings to my imagination."

" You would actually destroy my nerves," said lady Anna. " Fancy with me

is

is the most enlivening contemplation. I am so resolved upon happiness, that I will not see a cloud; no, not even papa's frown can make me sad; I know it must pass over; thus I say of my hopes,

> "In bright uncertainty they lie,
> Like future joys to Fancy's eye."

"May they be perfect as your heart could wish!" said Wentworth. "The most partial of your friends could not take a more lively interest in your happiness than I do."

"You are getting quite dangerous now, (looking at her watch). "Really I must go; I see the carriage waits, and I mean to call upon Marnley, for the pure pleasure of tantalizing her, and, if possible, gaining some information for Charles."

Our hero handed her ladyship to the carriage, and then proceeded to Stephens's hotel.

His inquiries produced no satisfaction; his advertisement was not noticed. It was

now past three o'clock; and though Bond-street exhibited evident proofs that the fashionable world were alive, Wentworth was not disposed to seek amongst them for those to whom he was known. The weather was sultry in the extreme, and he smiled internally as he viewed the throng of carriages which crouded the street—"Not one of these," thought he, "but could retire to some rural retreat, if their tastes led them thither: many own mansions, whose interests demand their presence, not less on the score of economy, than that it is essential to the comforts of the inferior classes; a landholder should be resident upon his estate. How custom perverts the judgment!" sighed he; "who would absent himself from scenes so calculated to attune the spirits of man, and better his moral system, by making him the grateful observer of Nature's bounties!"

Such reflections, we admit, may prove less than recommendatory to our hero, for the chief man in a novel should, according

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to general rule, be as romantic as Fancy could pourtray him; generous as profusion could suggest; thoughtless as Folly ever makes her favourites; yet successful in all his undertakings, whether they tend to corrupt the credulous child of mortality, or lead a willing victim to inevitable shame.

The sage who pores over the classic page, dedicates his hour to *acknowledged* genius; yet Fancy, even here, steps in, and animates the valued lore. The historic reader, in the truths that he imbibes, finds ample gain, though Fancy denies her aid; but where the mere offspring of imagination is presented to the general reader, it becomes a paramount consideration not to offend the judgment, while we presume to draw upon his time; not to weaken the sober empire of morality, while we beguile him into the flowery regions of Fancy; and when I, whom the public have so highly favoured, when I present a character, whose glowing vices shall call a blush upon the female cheek, or lead a

man to marvel at my accuracy, may I be held up, to use a *modern* eulogium, not as the "pride of one country, and the delight of another," but the gross libeller of my sex, a creature unworthy of public patronage or private esteem.

"One day certifieth another," says the Psalmist. In point of time, they are beautiful *fac similes,* whose glowing meridian and twilight beam equally prove their Author "divine;" but, alas! with what various scenes are these "stealing sisters" decorated! Joy strews her roses over the hours of some, while sorrow, with others, saddens even the noontide of day, and, by its cheerless sameness, makes life's registry a gloomy record. Such, however, was not the fate of our hero; individually his lot was a happy one; but the man whose capacious soul admits the claims of misery, whose eagle eye traces the human face, not with the transient glance of recognition, but with the inquiring beam of fraternal love, who seeks the house of woe from a better

better feeling than curiosity or ostentation—such a man must necessarily diminish some portion of those airy sunbeams which play round the hearts of the thoughtless. Suppose he pays the tribute of his tears, allow that he abridges his *own* sublunary enjoyments, to raise the sinking fund of poverty, the sensualist asks where is *his* gain? and the man of the world asks where is the balance? I answer, that it is "noted down;" the balance—— I will not describe its nature, for ye could not understand me; the philanthropist can comprehend and apply my calculation, for his mind is the transcript of that "book," in which there is no blot.

It is so impossible to give that animation to the page which actually diversifies life, that one fears to bring the many coloured scenes before the reader, lest the variety of its character should satiate, without convincing him of its accuracy. A living author has, with much elegant ingenuity, de-

fined the different ways in which a man walks through the streets of the metropolis; the act, as pertaining to all creatures *termed* rational, may appear to offer little scope of philosophy; yet, assuredly, the subject admits much observation.

Lord Osterly had posted to London, with his satellite, Mr. Supple, for the express purpose of attending lady Morbury's masquerade; he had walked from his lodgings in Albany, on this morning of our history, and he had a *purpose* for his walk; he strolled up Bond-street, and nodded at half a hundred ladies in carriages, and smiled at half a dozen on foot; protested to two or three of his intimate friends that it was "sulphureous hot;" yet he pursued his way to Loriot's, for he was *resolved* upon "playing the devil" this morning; and, perhaps, those who best knew his lordship considered this as his most innocent contest with the fiend.

Sir Charles Felton walked, for the mere pleasure of walking, with no decided motive;

tive; and if he brought home the "manners of the morn," who would deny him a recreation so beneficial to health?

Of captain Lennard it were useless to speak; a profession gives a man activity of mind; and if his optic views are less accurate, we excuse his abstraction, for he fills a place in society, and may give an example for the virtuous to imitate. I might be diffuse upon this simple subject; lead my readers to the boot-maker's with viscount P——, the wig-maker with colonel B——, to the picture-gallery with an orator who studied attitude, or to Grange's with the mere killer of time; what purpose would all this answer, but to illustrate that men collectively do walk?

But it is time to tell you, that Sidney had reached his own threshold, and was raising his hand to the rapper, when Hall, who had preceded his master some time previously, flung open the door, with a true cerberean growl, and discovered a young woman,

man, who was in the act of departing, evidently dejected, and with somewhat of fear in her countenance. She dropped a curtsey to our hero, and was descending the steps, when Sidney asked who she was, and what she wanted?

"She wants Bevans," said Hall; "but she wont take an answer; she thinks, because you are in town, sir, that he must be at home."

"Call her back," said Wentworth, peremptorily; and he waited the return of the humble inquirer.

"Come in, my girl," said Wentworth, leading the way to the library; the girl followed, with a deportment at once modest and reserved.

"You want Bevans, I understand."

"Yes, sir," said the girl; "his uncle is very ill, and wished to see him."

"I will send for him," said Wentworth; "I did not think of requiring his services while I remained in London; but as I shall probably

probably be detained longer than I expected, and his friends wish to see him, he shall come directly."

"You are very good, sir; my father will be happy to hear this;" and she was retiring, when our hero, who was somewhat of an enthusiast, with regard to countenance, thought he perceived anguish of heart in the expressive eye of his humble visitor—"Can I do any thing for your comfort, child?" said he.

"Sir!" said the girl, and her features were animated with surprise, not unmixed with distrust. "If you are really a good man," resumed the girl, with honest simplicity, "I would venture to ask your assistance till Philip comes."

"I hope I am an honest man," said Wentworth, his warm heart yielding to the unfashioned caution of the truly virtuous applicant. "Here, child, use this," he continued, putting a ten-pound note into her hand; "go home and make your father as

happy as you can; Philip shall be with you as soon as possible."

"Oh, my dear, dear father," said the girl, bursting into tears, "this will save more than him. Philip will gladly repay you, sir, and God will bless you." And again she was retiring, when Wentworth bade her consider the money as her own, not as the gift of Bevans.

"My own!" said the girl, in astonishment; "this is too much."

"Not at all; go, go, my girl," said Sidney, "and may Heaven spare your father to protect so good a daughter!"

The girl withdrew; and our hero instantly wrote a few lines, requiring the presence of his man with all dispatch, without apprizing him of the immediate cause of the summons. Ringing for a candle to seal his letter, he now recollected his faithful domestic was frequently in arrears, with regard to his wages; and upon his once or twice reminding him that it

was

was a destructive habit, and would render him ultimately poor; he had expressed himself ambiguously, yet with an honesty which disarmed all suspicion of his being imprudent.

Wentworth regretted that he had not earlier sought the confidence of his servant, whom he now fully believed to be the efficient support of an aged relative.

At this moment Hall made his appearance; the contrast in the characters of these, his two dependants, struck him forcibly; there was no reason why he should retain a man whose unlicensed profusion brutal manners made him unworthy of trust; giving him a limited, yet considerate warning, he bade him consider *his* resolution fixed.

Hall extenuated; he feared that his master was offended at the little entertainment they had given; he could assure him it was only a *pic-nic;* each of their visitors had brought their share.

"Worse and worse," said Wentworth; "then

"then you have made my house a receptacle for stolen goods."

"Dear me, sir," said Hall, "they were the servants of the marquis of Ormington's and lord Frankford's people, and they are on board wages; so it was their own free will, whatever they brought."

"In that case," said our hero, "you have made a tavern of my dwelling; nor do I give credit to your assertion; if their *own* extravagance led them to provide such a table, their presumption is unpardonable."

"Indeed, sir, I can assure you that such a thing can only happen once in a way," resumed Hall; "and if you will try me—put us all upon board wages, sir—you will find your account in it."

"Never," said Wentworth; "the plan is degrading to my notions of hospitality. I believe you have not found me a rigid master; I have not refused you such enjoyments as suited my ideas of propriety; you have betrayed the trust reposed in you, by exceeding my commands; and your inhumanity

humanity towards the young woman whom I fortunately met in the hall, would, of itself, prove a sufficient motive for your dismissal."

Though the last remark of our hero stood justified in his own mind, the conclusion which his mortified butler drew from it was by no means favourable to the pure intentions of Sidney; the girl was personable, and he imputed that to gallantry which deserved a very superior term.

Wentworth had apprized his father, by the same post, of his intention of remaining in town, until he could attain some satisfactory intelligence; had ordered his dinner, resolved upon dining alone, when a note was presented to him, from lady John Nugent, intimating that her carriage waited, and she consequently could take no refusal; he must dine in Gloucester-place. It was impossible to dispute her ladyship's mandate; she was one of his greatest favourites, and lord John a man whom he highly valued. Dispatching the duties of the toilet,

let, he stepped into the carriage. As the vehicle whirled over the stones, Wentworth compared its velocity with the revolving occurrences of life—"I, whom a motive distinct from gaiety has led into the tissue of fashionable bustle, am, as it were, *forced* to participate in its scenes. I own the charm of society to be infinitely attractive," thought he; "but all companies do not deserve the name of society; yes, I perceive that the connected man must conform *partially*; or, setting the world at defiance, he must forego the delights of friendship, and become a voluntary *solitaire*. Is there then no medium?" asked the more tranquil spirits of our descending moralist; "must we soar in heroics, or, by selfish seclusion, betray ourselves as ingrates to that Providence who has blessed us with power to heal, yet not denied us the enjoyments of life? I answer, no; this is to distrust yourselves; by *avoiding* the danger which chequer your mortal career, you ultimately increase your

vanity,

vanity, and render yourselves supine. Here the merit is—to pass uncontaminated through this alluring world, to select from the general mass such only as honour our distinction, while we bear with the weakness of the erring; we should not send forth our fiat; all men are not qualified for censors; and if in the silent hour of darkness the mind can retrace the scenes of the day, nor own a painful reflection, a truce with ideal speculations—peace hovers over the pillow of a heart thus trained; and whether it be the heart of a philosopher or an enthusiast, it were superfluous to wish him pleasant dreams,

CHAP. II.

"Never man was truly blest
But it compos'd, and gave him such a cast
As *Folly* might mistake for want of joy;
A cast unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart."

THE mild, yet manly character of lord John Nugent, exhibited a correct semblance of the poet's delineation; his lordship had counted full forty-five summers, yet time had made no ravages in his person; it seemed as if the meridian of his days were decked with peculiar lustre, that his own sex might contemplate the advantages of a moral life, and the softer class learn to prize those graces which survive and excel the mere hey-day of youth.

The

The reception of our hero was flattering in the extreme; her ladyship, as before observed, was one of the nieces of lady Layton; and Wentworth, whom they now considered as a connexion of their family, from the recent union of his cousin with sir George Beverly, appeared to have acquired a new interest in their esteem.

"You are very good, Mr. Wentworth," said lord John, "to answer the hasty summons of lady Nugent."

"I considered it as a very obliging condescension, to one who had been so remiss," replied Sidney; "yet I am not certain I should have been equally obedient, had the mandate come from any other of my friends."

"I see Nugent would flatter you," said her ladyship, smiling, "and endeavour to persuade you that I am excessively glad you take your dinner with us; but in truth, Mr. Wentworth, one of the most natural reasons which a woman can give for her sudden whims, stands avowedly prominent in my

late

late invitation. Need I add that my *curiosity* is on the alert, or would you doubt such an assertion from a sober matron ?"

" I could not possibly *doubt* any assertion of lady Nugent's," said Wentworth ; " more especially one whose candour is so conspicuous."

" Well, then, before our visitors arrive," resumed her ladyship, " let me tell my story. This morning, I was surprised by a visit from lord Osterly ; he was the bearer of letters from George, my aunt, and Fanny ; he introduced himself, with a sort of familiar assurance, not exactly suited to my taste. I was determined upon being reserved, from the moment of his arrival, I know not how it was, he forced me to laugh at some of his remarks, which were *outré* enough ; and a gentleman who was with him, a sort of echo, quite a character, he flung such a sentimental, yet complimentary shade over the *gaieté* of my lord, that I was insensibly led into conversation, from the mere whimsicality of their manner.

manner. Nugent came in, and as I discovered amongst the letters one addressed to him, I handed it to him. I since find that my brother expressed a wish we should show attention to lord Osterly, adding that he was an eccentric, yet very worthy fellow. Nugent, with his usual hospitality, soon after invited his lordship to take dinner with us, before he left town; this he regretted with more than necessary eloquence, declaring that, excepting this day, he was engaged for the whole of his stay; the inference was conclusive, and Nugent instantly waved all ceremony; his lordship in consequence dines with us, as likewise his friend.

"I was half angry when they departed, as I had hoped to escape further acquaintance; but I have actually rescinded my austerity since then, for upon reading the letters he brought, my curiosity is wound up to the highest degree. My aunt speaks of him as a most agreeable young man; Fanny says he is quite a necessary evil in the

country; yet she gives him some favourable traits of character, such, in fact, as lead me to think that she laughed at him herself, for the purpose of forestalling all that could be said against him: and his friend, Mr. Supple, my poor aunt, who never sees guile in any one, she pronounces this gentleman—'the most moral and entertaining companion she ever met. My dear child,' she adds, in one part of her letter, 'he has exposed the routine of fashionable life with such accuracy, yet with so tender a commiseration for its thoughtless votaries, that I feel I am doing you a great kindness in introducing this amiable man to your notice.'

"Now only consider my surprise, Mr. Wentworth, imagine what effect these eulogiums must have had on my mind, who had so presumptuously dared to draw very different conclusions during their short visit Nugent laughs at me, and calls my discernment very illiberal. I was so certain I should need support, and am almost as certain

tain that *you* would prove exactly the champion I wanted, that I no sooner heard you *had* been seen in Grosvenor-street this morning, than I dispatched my hasty billet, and can only thank you for being so obedient."

"We shall triumph," said Wentworth, laughing; "but tell me candidly, had you no other motive than that you avow in sending for me?"

"Why, yes, I believe I had," said her ladyship; "but I will not explain."

"The gauntlet has been thrown, I perceive," said our hero, "but I am armed."

"These women," interrupted lord John, "with all their affected precautions, how naturally they betray themselves! their eloquence is so spontaneous, they trust so much to the velocity of the machines stunning or bewildering their hearers, that they take no account of the mischief they *may* create."

"I am not *always* thus eloquent, you know, my dear John; and, indeed, I feel

half inclined to be angry with you; your remark would imply that I am a very Xantippe, when, in fact, my zeal takes rise in pure friendship."

"Charlotte," said lord John, smiling, "you are yet in the wrong track; to any other young man than Wentworth, your zeal might be injurious; he, I am persuaded, never feels resentment, where contempt would be more applicable."

"Lady John has been *my* champion," said Sidney; "I guessed as much: that minion, Supple, whose character I have more than once detected, he has not forgiven me. But you say right, my lord, I could not meet Mr. Supple as my equal; yet, however strange it may appear, I, at this time, have rather a wish to mark his conduct, and, in a degree, gain a knowledge of his plans, from a conviction that he is no stranger to some circumstances with which I wish to be acquainted."

"Well then, I have not done wrong in mixing you in my party," resumed lady John;

John; "I was beginning to conjure up horrors innumerable."

"Consign them to oblivion," said Wentworth, laughing; "I am not a fighting man, and really feel myself not only grateful for your zeal, but your invitation."

"It is one of the consequences of a wedded life," said lady John, "to feel one's insignificancy equivalent to weakness, when once the husband begins to reason; thus I was staunch in my opinions, till that collected mortal threw in his reasoning faculties, and proved me a thoughtless, short-sighted, dangerous casuist."

"It is rather a tender and lovely definition of the distinctness of love and friendship," said Sidney, "one on which I could pause until I had half resolved upon a single life."

"I would much rather that it led to a happier result," said lord John; "but you are romantic, Wentworth; it will pass over; I shall see you a married man; nay, if re-

 port

port may be believed, lady Anna Arlingham is the destined wife of Mr. Wentworth."

"Nothing can be more erroneous; I have only a general acquaintance in the family; her ladyship is excessively handsome, and her fortune too well known, not to attract numberless admirers; but I confess myself not the mere slave of beauty."

"Nugent has scarcely forgotten the widow," said lady John, smiling; "that brilliant constellation, who so far engaged even his attention last night as to make him forget his wife."

"What new whim did this said lady elicit," asked Wentworth, "that could possibly claim your notice?"

"Why Charlotte has associated your name with Mrs. Marnley, in a way that should guard me against committing a blunder equally dangerous with her own."

"Divest yourself of all delicacy upon that head," said Sidney; "I am heart-whole, and not so vain as lady John considers me to be."

"I give

"I give full credit to your assertion, Wentworth. Mrs. Marnley is a silly creature; her manners are conspicuous, and the property she is so unfortunate as to possess, will, no doubt, make her the victim of some mercenary spendthrift. I was attracted to her side from a wish to observe what influence a mask, who professed himself a fortune-hunter, appeared to gain; but I *continued* to follow, simply to learn who the female was, on whom she lavished her unfeeling wit. I did not succeed, and ultimately lost them in the crowd."

"I was there," said Sidney; "the female in question is a dependant of Mrs. Marnley's, a sort of companion, one, I believe, who has been so ill-judging as to embrace a situation for which she has not made up her feelings, and is, consequently, pained at the slights she meets."

"I cannot understand your explanation," said lady John: "would you insinuate that a woman who becomes a dependant should predispose her mind to meet indignities?

nities? is not this degrading a fallen, and perhaps amiable being, by making her the slave of prejudice, and unfitting her to meet the many cordial advances of the discerning?"

"Cordial advances!" said Sidney, with a melancholy smile; "you speak from principle; but, my dear lady Nugent, a woman who enters society as a known dependant, must bear the contumely of her own sex, and the effrontery of ours."

"It is a libel," said lady John; "I will not suffer such an odium to be cast upon my sex. Good Heavens! one woman not feel for another! not endeavour to chase the remembrance of the past, by cheering the present, and leading her to hope better days! if she is young, what can be more gratifying to a good mind? if she is in advanced life, the power of shielding declining age from the storms of adversity, what a soothing, what a grateful task!"

"Exquisitely so, to a *good* mind, as you observe," resumed Sidney: "but suppose,

my

my dear madam, there *could* be found amongst your sex, all lovely as you are, a *few* who are strangers to *mind*, who act only from motives of selfishness or envy, what becomes of your amiable system? it perishes, and the dependant is the creature I name."

"You have studied your subject with a suspicious accuracy," said lord John; "but I am your convert, Wentworth; the feminine virtues are the chief graces of women; we may laugh at wit, and be *amused* by mere vivacity, yet it is the softness of the character which sincerely attaches us; an unfeeling pleasantry is a most odious appeal to our judgment; and though we occasionally give them suffrage by our smiles, I think we are highly ill-judging in such leniency. Such is the nature of woman, that, without our approbation, she is a mere nonentity; some man must sanction her foibles, or applaud her virtues; they are the contending candidates for our favour; the assertion appears presumptuous,

 yet

yet it is not less true; and when we *smile* where we should censure, and are *silent* where we should applaud, we establish foibles which would otherwise be short lived, and repress that emulation which leads them nearer to perfection."

"You have taken a wide range," said lady John; "yet I own your strictures to be in a great degree just, and this is really a very humble acknowledgment for a mere woman."

"None but a *superior* woman would allow it," said Sidney; "and I wish, for the honour of humanity, that they bore a greater proportion in the scale."

"Silence," said lady John, for at that moment a loud rap announced the expected visitors.

"Spare lord Osterly," she continued, "for he seems perfectly well-disposed towards you."

"He is only an enemy to himself," answered Sidney.

Lord Osterly entered the drawing-room, followed

followed by his servile companion—"I have not exceeded your dinner-hour," said my lord, with a profound bow; "I have really been most famously pestered since I saw you; three or four of my intimate friends were so preposterous as to detain me on speculative matters; and, in fact, I was forced to break from them at last."

Lady John declared that his lordship was perfectly in time; and, turning to our hero, she was proceeding to introduce them, when his lordship, with an exclamation of surprise, seized the hand of Sidney—"How are you, my dear Wentworth?" said he. "I half promised myself the pleasure of presenting my inquisitive phiz at your breakfast-table to-morrow; I have an immensity of business in train, and not a little budget of anecdote to communicate; but I can yet spare time for you."

"You do me honour," said our hero; "I shall expect you in the morning; I breakfast at ten."

" At ten, *mon Dieu!* my dear fellow, give me an hour's grace."

" I will give you a breakfast, come when you may," said Sidney ; " but as idleness can alone be your apology in this case, I shall not wait for you."

" What a bachelor-like system is your's!" resumed my lord ; " I will be judged by lady John—are there not some very suspicious traits of singularity in our friend, madam ?"

" I believe he is not a fashionable man in many points," replied her ladyship ; " but if singularity is a shrine at which young men bow, to be singularly right may, in time, become a custom, when the example comes from one so calculated to give force to reasonable motives as Mr. Wentworth."

" Your ladyship's sentiments are highly flattering, and eminently calculated to establish a proud man in his prejudices : forgive my term, lady John ; but, believe me, there

there is more vanity in these methodical fellows than you imagine: now Wentworth knows I always quiz him; and if I was to put myself to the trouble of seeking his habits at *home,* I have not a doubt but I should find the journal of his domestics not quite so nonpareilish as he would give us to suppose."

"I give you leave to seek it," said Sidney, laughing; "but I do not disown the imputation of vanity, when favoured with the approbation of lady Nugent."

"My dear lord," said Mr. Supple, "I think *we* have recently had the pleasure of seeing what Mr. Wentworth is '*at home.*'—Adderfield and its charming neighbourhood seems to mourn your absence, sir," and he bowed to our hero.

"My father, I believe, sir, is anxious for my return," said Wentworth; "and my friends, I hope, do justice to my regards, by thinking of me sometimes."

"What a stoic you are!" said lord Osterly; "not a question about the ladies—the lovely

lovely lady Beverly, the Thalian Fanny, and the divine Louisa. Ah, Sidney, you fear to trust yourself, lest I should make any discovery."

"Not I, indeed," replied our hero, whose surprise at the freedom of his lordship's manner was far inferior to that of lady John; "I hear from my father and sir George, and they, knowing my disposition, make their communications minutely descriptive."

"Did Beverly name our departure?" asked lord Osterly.

"That was an item too material to be omitted," said Sidney, with a smile; "yet I did not know you had reached *London*"

"You perceive, my lord, that our little circuit is known to Mr. Wentworth," said Supple.

His lordship looked grave for a moment; then, addressing lady Nugent, he ran into a most laboured panegyric on the attractions of her sisters.

"We shall be greatly disappointed, my

love," said lord John, " if our sisters really deserve these encomiums."

Lord Osterly stared.

" Indeed, my lord," resumed lord John, " I should be the first to condemn them, if they were the women you describe ; mere personal beauty, my lord, is so perishable a tenure ; extreme vivacity, and affected languor, equally such futile qualities in women, to say nothing of their affectation. I must repeat, that if they deserve your eulogium, they are greatly changed : but I rather think your subject (certainly a grateful one to a young man) has led you to flatter, where your cooler reason would lead you simply to applaud."

" Permit me to observe, my lord," interjoined Supple, " the ladies in question are such superior women, that common forms and common distinctions are quite out of place, as applied to them ; but, flattery, my dear lord, is it not the expected incense, the inseparable offering which beauty demands ? A man of known rank, such

such as my noble friend is, in a manner, educated in the sphere of its immediate influence, he is accustomed to the garbled traffic, and is excusable if he sometimes passes the dross, where the sterling ore would be a more appropriate disbursement."

"I do not exactly agree with you, sir," replied lord John; "the education of the higher classes of men, I cannot consider to be of that sort which precludes them the exercise of their judgment; and Englishmen are by no means the most *tractable* part of mankind. There are many degrees of flattery; I speak not of childish follies, nor do I presume to judge harshly, I think, when I add, that the most injurious species of flattery is that which young men usually assume on their entrance into what is called the world. To women of sense, such adulation is affronting—on women of weak intellects, its baneful effects are variously elicited; few of the many females whom Vice numbers of her family, but could

trace

trace her errors to insidious flattery; and if I appear severe upon what custom in *some* cases has sanctioned, I ask lord Osterly's pardon: it is always a matter of regret with me, when I see a young man addict himself to flattery; and I sometimes, with a freedom which my years sanction, take the liberty of warning him."

"I thank you sincerely, my lord," said lord Osterly; "I am perfectly amenable to your friendly intention, yet confess myself as innocently actuated as any man who talks at random can be."

"Wentworth," said lady John, "we will now christen this antediluvian foible—flattery shall be called paper currency; and that praise which we *all* more or less *demand*, the current coin: but how shall we settle that sort of prominent compliment which men sometimes pay to men?"

"It shall be cried down as base coin," said Sidney; "shall I purchase the shears? fear not my assiduity in *cutting*, wherever the imposition is attempted."

"Any bad shillings?" sang lord Osterly,

with

with a voice in which the Jewish accent was imitated.

"Silver!" said Wentworth, "no, no, my lord, it is brass—broad, glaring brass; give it no currency." And his eye, with a quick glance, passed over Supple, to whom the preceding conversation was by no means agreeable.

Dinner was announced. As lady John, led by Sidney, descended the stairs, Supple, in a half whisper, declared his admiration of Mr. Wentworth's figurative language—"It is a pity he is not in the house," said he, addressing lord John.

"I hope he has a better claim to a distinction so honourable than mere tropes and figures," said lord John; "eloquence is attractive; but I would sooner be convinced than delighted by the man who represents a free country."

"Infinitely just, my lord; but we all know our greatest orators have not been inattentive to this, and other less essential items in a political character."

"This is, perhaps, one of the clearest

arguments

arguments in my favour," replied lord John, who had taken his seat at the dining-table; "sound has often been accepted in place of sense; and when, upon any slight contingence, any difference of opinion, the orator is unmasked, or, to use a modern application, when he is travestied, we see ourselves in a most ludicrous point of view, and are mortified at the imposition. To an actor or actress who fill their parts with credit, no man would blush to pay the tribute of his feelings: if Mr. Mathews has acquired his excellencies as a modern buck, by riding with the grooms of my lord H——, or any other of that conspicuous band of heroes, we express no surprise; the line was *correct* in the actor, who must suit 'the action to the word, and the word to the action.' Eloquence, though a graceful charm, is by no means a general attribute amongst our public men; but its place is frequently supplied by sound argument."

"Have you begun your canvass," asked lord Osterly of his mortified friend.

"No,

"No, my dear lord," replied Supple, "your lordship knows my sentiments on this important subject; even did my pretensions to an honour so distinguishing bear the most promising success, I could never summon courage to speak in public."

"Your modesty was never questioned," resumed the young lord: "take my advice, offer yourself for *Coventry*, and I will engage for your being *sent* there."

"What a charming flow of spirits!" retorted Supple; "happy age, when, without thought, the exuberances of genius thus elicit themselves."

Lord John and our hero, who had actually blushed at the undaunted sarcasm of the peer, felt relieved from their embarrassment, when the servile toad-eater thus converted an insult into a compliment; but their contempt took place of that consideration which even this insignificant animal was on the point of attaining.

"Did you ever see general Millet play the devil?" said lord Osterly, addressing Sidney.

"Never,

"Never, my lord; to what epoch in his career do you refer?"

"Wentworth, I hate that saucy sort of ignorance which you affect; you know I mean at Loriot's in Bond-street."

"Are not you imposing upon me?" said Sidney; "is it possible that a military man, at a season like the present, or, in fact, at any time, could he be so frivolously engaged?"

"A thousand thanks, my dear sir, for your allusion; but, upon my honour, I think it an admirable amusement; it requires eye, strength, and agility; one meets ones friends, we hear what is going on; in short, I think it will have a run: but I much fear that I shall never beat the general; he has every turn so ready, so wonderfully adroit, he astonishes me."

"Yet I think he is a general who might be *beaten*," said Wentworth, smiling; "and have you really been consuming your time in such a ridiculous way this morning?"

"Guilty,"

"Guilty," said my lord; "that is, I gave two hours to the devil, one to an angel, and then met a few friends at my hotel, on speculative matters."

"Speculation, my lord, is a very comprehensive word," said lord John, "and, in the present times, an almost alarming one: may I ask if they are projects likely to come before the public?"

"That depends entirely upon the patronage they meet," replied the peer; "at present, we have only talked the subjects over; the first of which is, to establish a club for playing the devil. I perceive you smile, Wentworth, but I heed it not; we propose a particular costume, and by way of giving eclat to the thing, we mean to play at *Lord's* cricket-ground; the opposing names will give a sort of celebrity, which must collect a meeting. Our second project is—but I entreat your silence on the subject; a few of us have resolved upon introducing the Spanish cloak, early in the ensuing winter; we have tried

it,

it, and I am really astonished, that a dress so calculated to display the figure has not long since been adopted. Our third resolution is yet in its infancy, scarcely arranged; but you will own I was not idle this morning, when I add, that besides what I have stated, I took down the minutes of a hearing between De Hayes and the managers of the opera-house, he having unfortunately deputed me his umpire; and poor ——— has implored me, in the most pathetic manner, to represent to the ladies who direct the private concerts, that he cannot possibly sing but where he may introduce his *female friend*. I consider this a grievance, and shall certainly use my influence."

Lord John cast his eyes towards the head of the table; he seemed on the point of reproving his guest, when, recovering himself, he said, with a smile of expressive meaning—"You, my dear, have, I believe, a very different idea of lord Osterly's aat remark?"

"Most

"Most undoubtedly," said lady Nugent, "and, as a matron, I do not hesitate to avow it. You have a sister, my lord; let me ask you if you consider yourself correct, in interfering in an arrangement such as you have named? I am sorry to avow, that the two persons you name were admitted at some concerts where I was last season; the reasons given by their employers were exactly what you have stated; the Italian would not attend, but with his disgraceful companion: but I am neither so great a connoisseur in music, nor yet so unmindful of myself, as to pay the price of decorum for any entertainment which fashion may suggest."

"But, my dear lady John, these people will not act but with their colleagues; it is now become an established system. I experienced the greatest disappointment at lady Finsbury's a few weeks since; she had engaged B—— to lead; the company were assembled, and, just as we were expecting a divine bravura from Mrs. H——,

B——

B—— called her ladyship aside, and declared that he could not accompany Mrs. H——; he never acted with her; she was not one of his colleagues: now only conceive what a dilemma! what could we do?"

"Dismiss the insolent dictator," said lady John; "and if the female in question was a woman of character, and could accompany herself, give her every encouragement, and prove that foreign aids were superfluous."

"Impossible, my dear madam; an English singer, like an ill-judged *ad libitum* in a school-girl's tedious performance, always sets the company yawning; no, no, we bear with it from a little national kindness, but it is a horrid bore."

"I am a dissenter," said Sidney: "we have many English singers who have attained excellence, and, if properly encouraged, would make those *doubtful* refugees wholly valueless: but, since the subject has been named, permit me to ask if you think our young unmarried women do not

go out of their path, when they sing *with* this bold Italian? I declare to you, my lord, that I quitted a party in disgust, at the excessive familiarity of the encouraged squaller, when, upon reflection, all my anger reverted to the females who so unblushingly assisted his presumption."

"By Heavens, you are worse than Felton," said the peer; "at the countess of Cashley's, lady Bell, the lovely daughter of the countess, danced a *pas seul* in the highest style. I was in raptures; Felton said she was unmerciful. I acquiesced, for she had nearly stolen my heart, when the frothy Hibernian declared that she was unmerciful to herself, by the exertions she used, and *too* generous to the company.—I was vexed, and asked him to explain, when, in his bold way, he added, he could always see *such* shows by paying for them, but that he had no idea of a woman of rank assuming the style of an opera-dancer.—What a goth!"

"Felton is always judicious," said Sidney,

ney, "though lively in the highest degree: there is not a man of more nice delicacy, and I take honour to myself in naming him as my most esteemed friend; and, in this, as in many other of his sentiments, I most heartily concur."

Lord John held up his hand, while lady Nugent joined in applauding sir Charles.

Lord Osterly looked towards his satellite—"My dear lord, you know I am such a lover of *excellence*, from the most minute to the most important of human attempts, that I am obliged to differ with your friends;" and he bowed with the utmost deference.

"We have the majority," said Wentworth; "so, my lord, we are not your colleagues in this matter."

"The bill will pass, nevertheless," said my lord; "out of these doors, I think I have the general voice."

"I hope not," said lady John; "nay, I was going to petition your lordship; as you appear to have much influence in fashion-

able arrangements, your decisions might lead to a better system."

"I will promise you my best services, and even forego my own ideas on these things, if your ladyship would contrive to tr nsport the lovely Miss Beverlys to the metropolis, for even a short season."

"I could not compromise upon such terms, my lord; I consider the London winter as actually expired, and mean on my own part to quit town very soon; nor, until I can receive my sisters with a prospect of a more rational routine than the existing scene, will I press them to join me."

"They are above its follies," said Wentworth; "yet I can answer for them, that they are not desirous of mixing in fashionable life; nor are they more than grateful, in owning content where so much true happiness awaits them."

"I never knew an attached man who did not wish his rose to blush unseen," said lord Osterly; "but, Wentworth, monopolizer

nopolizer as you are, the 'desart air' shall not exhale their sweetness."

"You do me too much honour in the association, my lord; and your threat—forgive me if I add, that the desarts of Adderfield must breathe its echo ere I am a convert to its inference."

"I knew your vanity would be piqued; but I will leave you in doubt; it is not my way to satisfy curiosity."

Lord John and his lady looked as though they were not the least interested in the import of his lordship's words; yet the retort of Sidney was not exactly conciliating, and lord John awaited its effect upon his guest.

Nothing could be farther from the general tenor of lord Osterly's character than resentment; he could row an incorrigible taylor, who had not comprehended his orders, or menace a poor man, whose child he supported in splendid infamy; these were usual ebullitions of courage in our modern peer; while those attacks which a high

high sense of honour, or, plainly speaking, those which would offend a man of sense, were always treated as *badinage:* nor, perhaps, should the distinction be so hastily judged; it is wrong in any man to address a language to his auditor which is not suited to his capacity; a trifler should be treated as a trifler; and a man of sense, whom we will suppose to be actuated by discretion, he never insults his *equal*, by considering him *other than* his equal. It is so much the province of a man at the head of his own table to make his visitors feel easy, the task may be so pleasant and delightful in some cases, and in others so tangible and irksome, that I know few situations in which forbearance is more imperiously demanded. Lord John had, in a manner, drawn the young lord into an exhibition of his character; his motive might, perhaps, be impeachable, as it is certain he, in a degree, expected some whimsical definitions; but when the dashing peer had made his statement, there remained

mained no balance in his favour. Lord John could not act the censor; he was not authorized to do so; he could not applaud, for he would not give even a momentary countenance to such glaring frivolities.—Then gentle ridicule seemed the only medium: here even there rose up an obstacle. What lord John smiled at, our hero more seriously denounced. Lord John whimsically described the contention of the "*devil's club.*" Wentworth hoped there would not be found a dozen men willing to unite in so gross a folly. Again, the Spanish cloak was defined, by lord John, to be infinitely superior to the buck's upper-benjamin: Sidney avowed, that the hazard which those egregious boobies ran in their chariot-races, placed, even them, in a rank above the pedestrian masqueraders, who would be but the walking puffs for their hungry tailors.

"You have never been fixed upon as a man capable of leading," said lord John.

 "Wentworth,

"Wentworth, I must think with lord Osterly, that your vanity is piqued."

"They know me better," said Sidney; "they have not ventured on plans so hopeless. I am not fastidious, my lord, nor would I vend opinions; but, assuredly, when *I* am selected as a *leader* in fashionable life, the world must have used me roughly; it must have abrogated my present privileges of mixing in rational society; my feelings must be blunted; in fact, my character must pass an ordeal, to which, I trust, it can never be exposed, for I value domestic life, and cannot comprehend any lasting happiness out of its circle. I repeat, I can never be a fashionable man."

"Faith, my dear fellow, you are a stranger to yourself," replied lord Osterly; "there is a plentiful portion of asperity in your remarks, which would certainly help you as a *public* man—I mean in parliament."

"I presume

"I presume to think that Mr. Wentworth's talents would be highly serviceable to the lower house," said Supple.

"It is a most erroneous presumption, if you *really* think so, sir; but, forgive me if I add, that while I *smile* at your compliment, it bears a reference that amuses me; I could almost think I was retracing my juvenile career, and receiving the superabundant praises of a little *coterie*, who used to adjudge my merits—with this difference, that what one values from the lips of women (who are always eloquent where affection dictates) appears doubtful, when offered to us at a period of life so distinct; and, more especially, when that judge is a comparative stranger."

"Supple," said lord Osterly, "my friend will term this brass; I already perceive he is using the shears; but I will maintain he is formed for a dashing patriot."

"Worse and worse, my lord; the term is obsolete; I do not know the thing."

 "Why,

"Why, surely you do not denounce ——, ——, or ——?"

"Bitterness is not patriotism, my lord. Power and place would not transform a really independant man. Even I have seen the most rancorous reformers prodigal to wilfulness, when invested with office; power is a dangerous plaything to some men. But, for the word patriot, I beg you not to use it; I have actually expunged it from my vocabulary; it must be regenerated, ere I admit it to engage my attention."

"Yet you will allow, sir," said Supple, "that the warmth of party spirit gives an animation to numberless subjects, which would otherwise be unheeded by the people out of doors."

"If you mean by animation, that degrading system of personalities now so plentifully bandied from side to side, I must confess myself again your opponent. When the best-educated part of a community are collected

collected together, and when they are invested with a power so noble as that of settling and advancing the interests of a kingdom like ours, one naturally looks for that dignity inseparable from true greatness; we expect to be edified by their decisions, while we are benefited by their deliberations; but, for my own part, (forgive me, lady John) I really think their revilings are like the little bickerings of women; nor should I be surprised if they, at last, abuse each others features."

"The reporters are not always accurate, Mr. Wentworth; like other reviewers, they have those whom they *must* favour, and those to whom they are indifferent," said Supple.

"It requires very little discernment to detect the hirelings," replied Wentworth; "the miniature type displays their trick, and 'want of room, &c.' is their usual apology: but I take my observation from the actual theatre; and while I do homage to those whom it is honourable to praise, I regret the family is not more numerous."

 "We

"We shall have a satire from the pen of Wentworth," said lord Osterly; "but, beware; I warn you that Supple dabbles with two or three of the most piquant of our monthly publications."

"I will give Mr. Supple leave to lash me when he finds me in print," said our hero. "I certainly had a surmise that Mr. Supple used his pen in *one* diurnal print; your lordship's elucidation confirms it;" and he looked towards Supple with an eye full of meaning.

Lady Nugent had retired, when lord John entered into a warm commendation of lord Newstead's satire—"I do not so much applaud him as a poet, as for that promise of future genius, which his lordship will no doubt evince; yet I think the work in all respects excellent—a fair, keen satire."

Supple presumed to differ in opinion; he could forgive lord Newstead *all* he had said of male writers; but there was something beneath man, in that unvarnished

odium

odium he had cast upon some females, whose elegant pens had enriched the hoards of literature."

"It was highly judicious in his lordship to treat the *licentious* of either sex in the way he has done; 'a shameless woman is the worst of men.' I wish it was possible to believe," continued Sidney, "that the writings to which you allude were hoards; in that case, their pernicious principles would not be promulgated. As to literature, I believe *we* do not understand the term in the same sense."

"You are right, Wentworth," replied lord John; "no censure can be too severe, where so much mischief may be incurred by silence. I am often tempted to answer those glaring puffs, inserted to raise the credit of a book, which should, if it had its desert, be burnt for the good of the public."

"My lord, you are not aware of the connexion which exists between book-

makers

makers and newspaper writers," said Sidney.

"Indeed, Mr. Wentworth," said Supple, "you are misinformed; I can assure you that——"

"Pardon me, sir," resumed Wentworth, "the thing is known—a certain style in language, a system of *morality* equally *refined* and *useful* to society, a propensity to retail or new christen old jokes; these, and a thousaud other obvious similarities, place the matter beyond a doubt, to say nothing of the palpable puffs."

"So much for your morals," said lord Osterly, turning to Supple; "now quiz me if you shall foist your old stories upon me. Let me see, Wentworth—I have almost forgotten my Greek—morals means *ethics*, don't it? it is derived from the Latin as well as Greek, is it not?"

"Certainly, my lord; the word means *manners*, or behaviour."

"Mr. Wentworth is prejudiced, my dear lord;

lord; I must trust to your known liberality to revoke a decision so hasty."

"I sincerely hope he will persist in his opinion," said our hero; "I would rather submit to your conclusion respecting myself, than argue a point on which I could not be moved: but if lord Osterly should relapse, I warn him, there is a sort of enchanted circle attached to this phalanx—splendid dissipation, occult interference, Venetian usury, with *some* fine specimens of poetic fire; all these and more dangers surround the man who links himself with this band: I repeat, my lord, that from the *money-lending* advertisement in the first columns, to the *poetic* effusion in poet's corner, the insidious clue is extended; and I tell you this without hesitation."

Lord Osterly looked thoughtful for a moment; he turned towards Supple, with an expression of inquiry upon his countenance.

"An Englishman," said Supple, evading the eye of the young lord, "have you

not

not often, my lord, regretted," and he turned to lord John, "that we are so strongly addicted to prejudices? I must certainly consider the English as slaves to this ungenerous foible."

"Not quite so bad, sir," said lord John. "I allow we have a tincture of this quality, which appears to you so formidable; but the known liberality of our nation is too well established to give us the title of *slaves* in this particular. An Englishman of education is usually a very sensitive animal; and, until deceived, the most unsuspicious and trusting of men. I admit, that when his resentment is excited, he sometimes narrows his heart, and consequently views things through a false medium; yet, with a few exceptions, I believe him to be a convincible creature."

Supple bowed profoundly, and the footsteps of the little family dancing in the drawing-room above arresting the attention of our hero, the gentlemen quitted the dining-parlour.

As

As Sidney entered the room the children paused: lady John, who was playing a reel, arose from her seat: Wentworth replaced her ladyship, and taking one of the bashful cherubs as his partner, formed a reel. Lord John stood looking on, all the father emanating in his eyes; lord Osterly lolled upon a sofa, with his eye-glass fixed to his eye; Supple, with affected rapture, repeating bravo at every possible interval.

The little fairies, three in number, were emulous to keep up the dance, till Wentworth, with an interest for their safety, gave in. Lord Osterly was then entering into a most elaborate descant on the "infant graces," as he called them, when lady John, in a low voice, begged him to desist; and ringing for their attendant, gave them to her care for the night.

"We take the liberty of checking our friends, my lord," said lady John, "in any observation which could possibly inspire vanity:

vanity: you have heard lord John's sentiments upon flattery, and I am a convert to his opinion, in this, as in most cases."

"Forgive me, my dear madam, if I aver that your plan is wrong; you will repress that emulation so essential to the improvement of children."

"In points where education is the object," replied lady John, "we endeavour to stimulate their exertions, by qualified praise; but where *person* is made a subject of interest and unguarded remark, the most injurious evils may ensue; jealousy, envy, and pride, are the frequent forfeits paid by the uninformed mind, at the suggestions of ill-judged compliment."

Lord Osterly was not convincible, nor did he like the subject; fortunately his carriage was announced, when, reminding Sidney of his intention of breakfasting in Park-street, he, with his companion, retired.

Wentworth remained not long; but after

ter mutual professions of regard, sought his home, with an anxious expectation of gaining some intelligence concerning the advertisement.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

" Honour, my lord, is much too proud to catch
At ev'ry slender twig of nice distinction.
These for th' unfeeling vulgar may do well ;
But those whose souls are by the nicer rules
Of virtuous delicacy only sway'd,
Stand at another bar than that of laws."

DISAPPOINTMENT awaited our hero ; no notice had as yet been taken of the advertisement: nor did the ensuing morning prove more favourable to his hopes ; he had read the Post long before the arrival of lord Osterly ; the mediating intelligencer again stood in the first page of the paper: Sidney read it with a feeling which he termed impartial, and his decision was drawn in favour of its diction—" I do not perceive

perceive any thing like pride in this," said Wentworth; "I trust it could not be called arrogant; if I know my own heart, I think I should not hesitate to answer an appeal of this kind. Durweston, are not you resentful? Yet I own my father was unkind;" and in idea, he retraced doctor Firmor's elucidation. To Mrs. Fitzhenry the heart of our hero owned an involuntary homage; the sincerity of her disposition claimed his reverence—"Good Heavens! how different are the feelings of men!" sighed Sidney. "My father would have been content to be deceived; while I should have worshipped her candour, and, perhaps, for her sake, have passed through life unconnected. Yet, what is the home of a single man?" he resumed, casting his eyes around the apartment, which he was now measuring with hasty strides; "every comfort awaits my acceptance, as far as mere independence can give happiness. Books have their charms; yet many comparatively insignificant pursuits mix in the journal

nal of even a thinking man, many which could not beguile the man whose home was graced by a female of delicacy, a rational companion, one who would cheer my return with her smiles. Am I selfish," continued the musing Wentworth, "when I go on to make her the soother in the hour of sickness; the angel who would soften that irritability which bodily anguish so generally excites in our sex? it is not selfish—we are bid to seek good; and the chastening of an attached woman, next to that of finite ordinance, must improve our nature;" and the apostrophe of the fair stranger rose upon his memory; "mine are attuned to woe, and privacy is their refuge." His feelings now prompted the opposite situations, and *he* was in idea the comforter, in place of the comforted. "How grateful—how delightful—to lead a genuine mind from unmerited obscurity!—to give the power of independence to a heart capable of appreciating its value! Very few women resemble Miss Tracey," resumed

med Sidney; "her mind was nobly disinterested; could I hope as much, I should not fear to give my admiration to *seeming* excellence, wherever I met it. I would certainly *prove* the heart I wished to wear; and if it stood my ordeal, I think I might safely trust my honour where my affections were decidedly given. Yet I have railed at the very dependant, whose manners and person have claimed my notice; there is something vilely abject in the term 'companion;' but where are the resources for an unportioned educated woman?—she must submit in some way: then it becomes a matter of interest to observe *how* she conducts herself under contumely, neglect, and insult;" and as the approaching footsteps of lord Osterly reached the ear of Wentworth, a sort of reconciling smile passed over his features—"I am either more interested for this Miss Sidney than I ought to be, considering our acquaintance," said our hero, "or I am falling into that cynical sort of self-assurance, which

is

is usually attached to the character of an advancing bachelor."

"Here I am, free as air, light as the gossamer, or the breath of love," said lord Osterly, as he ran into the breakfast-room.

"I congratulate you," said Sidney; "to see you out of leading-strings is a miracle."

"I did not press Supple to accompany me; and, indeed, he has enough to do this morning. I push off for Brighton tomorrow at one o'clock."

"You were right in not making him my visitor," said Sidney; "he must have perceived my omission last night; I am glad he understands me."

"You are certainly prejudiced, my dear Wentworth; positively you almost led me to doubt last night; but, this morning, he has given me the most convincing proof of his disinterestedness, and I was forced to own myself greatly pleased by his zeal."

"I do not exactly understand the nature of your friendship," said Sidney, "but I have

have taken the liberty of surmising a little. You are profuse in your expenditure, and he flatters you with the belief that you are generous ; it is a veil necessary to his own advancement, and he does not give you credit for deep penetration."

"By Heavens! no other man dares say so much to me!" said lord Osterly. "Wentworth, how do you mean to qualify this extraordinary sort of schooling?"

"By saying more extraordinary things," replied Sidney.

"Why you treat me like a mere boy," resumed his lordship ; "I know not how it is that I bear with you."

"Nay, do not say that *I* treat you like a boy," said Wentworth; "you are an infant in the hands of Supple, who, in place of those toys which amuse the nursery inhabitant, gives his pet the worldly toys of error, under every deceptious garb in which vice can be disguised. I laugh at your rising anger, my lord ; I am not to be discouraged ; listen to me—I consider you

as past the age of boyhood, and would speak to you as a man. I know that you have recently succeeded to an unincumbered estate, that the world lays all before you, and that you have taken a wrong path; you have lost at the gaming-table; you have betted at Newmarket, and been unsuccessful; and, forgive me when I add, that the most reprehensible incaution has marked your conduct in another particular—I yesterday saw your carriage occupied by a female whose dress and manner sufficiently explain her character; I knew not how your engagements are, but I actually resolved upon naming this to you, though you had not given me the present opportunity."

"My good moral Joseph," replied lord Osterly, "I know not with what agent you deal, but you are certainly wonderfully accurate in your statement; but tell me what can a poor devil do, who is in for it? I am bringing up famously in money matters; but as for poor Maria, she is a lovely girl, you

you must allow that; she starts for Brighton at four o'clock, and I follow to-morrow, so she wont offend your morality for some weeks."

"I wish you could be serious," resumed Sidney. "Let me ask you if a man of Supple's age is not the most hardened of villains, if he upholds you in foibles, or rather vices, so glaring? Consider your sister—a young, handsome, unmarried woman. I confess your folly led me into an odious mistake; I knew the arms on the carriage, and seeing a female within, concluded it was Miss Marnley; I addressed her, and was sensibly mortified when I discovered my error."

"Prudish, sly fellow," said my lord; "why there is scarcely a married man of my acquaintance who would make such an incident a subject for reproof: but I must proceed to business—can you tell me how the fortunes of the Beverlys stand? must they wait till the old lady hops off, or is it paid down upon their marriage?"

"You astonish me," said Wentworth; "is it possible you have blunted your best feelings so as to speak of marriage in this trading sort of manner?"

"Pish! I hate sentiment. I think Fanny Beverly a charming little flirt, though Louisa would certainly be more easy to manage; yet I love spirit, and a little opposition would give zest to an irrevocable slavery; but, as I want money, I should not choose to venture too far before I knew exactly how matters stood in this particular."

"I must offer my advice," said Sidney; "give up all idea of it, unless you can immediately resign all your present connexions. Nay, I should absolutely think a year of probation was necessary to your character, before you offered yourself to the acceptance of a virtuous woman. I am indifferent to your smile; believe me, the man who associates with the shameless part of the other sex, loses so much of his original dignity, his manners are tainted

with

with a libertinism of speech, there is so much *nonchalance* in his every action, that a *truly* delicate woman (who must necessarily recede from a rake) would shrink from his addresses."

"You are a pupil of that formal pedant lord John Nugent; I could scarcely train my features to attend to his conversation: but the man is an arrant rogue; he knows his wife is young and attractive, and is continually flattering her understanding, in order to make her chains less galling. I should like to put him upon the alert; and if you throw in a caveat against my projects with the Adderfield girls, quiz me if I don't lead him a dance."

"I would never advise a man to any thing which must tend to his disgrace," said our hero; "or it is probable that no better proof of the inadequacy of vice, when opposed to sense and delicacy, could be offered to your notice. You will never be so presumptuous as to pursue a conduct

so exceptionable; and if you did, I repeat *you* would be the sufferer."

"Do you think I fear lord John? not I, by my pye-balls; and as to the law and damages, who minds that? it makes a dash. Let me see, if I could but fix upon a chum now; we might make a sort of cross bargain, you know, take a trip to Scotland, and then introduce the ladies with new titles—what do you say to it?"

"That you are incorrigibly licentious," replied Wentworth; "the fact to which you revert will not bear reflection; it is always dangerous to treat crimes with levity. For shame, my lord; you were not thus bold in your opinions a few months since; shake off this degrading assumption; it is not your natural character."

"I must have my run, Wentworth; I will talk with you when I come to town again: but, be honest, tell me what is the fortune of Fanny Beverly?"

"She has fifteen thousand pounds at her

own

own disposal now, and will share lady Layton's property at her decease. When I give you this explanation, my lord, I merely answer your question: you have thought fit to name me as the professed admirer of Louisa Beverly—I must contradict the report; I esteem the family, and regard the girls as sisters: but should you prosecute the intention you have avowed, I will act a brother's part; and, while I disclaim the imputation of a meddler, shall think myself justified in apprizing lady Layton that lord Osterly, under his *present* character, is not worthy the hand of Miss Beverly."

"You are a ridiculous prig, Wentworth; why your heart must be impenetrable if it can resist the charming flashes of wit so often elicited by the lovely Fanny. I do not credit your threats—I understand your meaning—you would *reform* me—I shall be good by-and-bye: but, *entre nous*, this same Fanny is not insensible; I think, without vanity, I may own that my addresses would not be rejected."

 "I do

"I do not doubt but you *could* make yourself acceptable to a woman of delicacy," replied Sidney; "yet it must be by *another* assumption of character; for, at present, believe me, those who know you best are sincerely concerned to perceive what a strong hold the insidious Supple has attained; and, while you are his slave, no error into which you may fall will claim commiseration, or cause you to be considered other than a very weak man."

"This is Felton's proud style—he has been backbiting; I hate those blundering Irishmen, always pushing themselves forward upon the canvas; I will be quizzed if they are not the greatest idiots under the sun."

"How erroneous!" said Wentworth. "For myself, I am not in the habit of quoting my friend's language, however deserving of imitation; but let me beg you not to suffer such a prejudice to deform your understanding. A modern play-writer, speaking of those overflowings of the heart,

heart, which are, perhaps, the most striking characteristic of the Irish, makes this liberal and judicious remark—'Whilst you furnish him with expressions that excite laughter, you must graft them upon sentiments that deserve esteem.' The English, generally speaking, are strangers to the real disposition of their neighbour islanders; many form their decisions from our theatrical exhibitions of far-fetched blunders and blustering courage; others, I am led to believe, go yet lower for their information, and consider St. Giles's as the fairest sample of a nation which they wish to depreciate. But let me ask you if this is not wilful prejudice? Suppose *we* were to be scanned in a similar way—what if our nobility were to be rated agreeably to the standard of a 'buck's club;' our women, by those blushless seceders from virtue, who, under a new *name* (admitting it to be a title), are suffered to disgrace society? Should we be contented to have our *general* character thus sacrificed, because a band

 of

of blockheads, and a few women, disgrace our island?—assuredly not."

"My acquaintance does not lie much amongst the Irish," said lord Osterly; "but I cannot like those I have seen, and Felton is my aversion. By the way, do you know who the Crier was at Morbury's masquerade? I know he came with Felton."

Sidney replied in the negative.

"I shall make him out yet," resumed his lordship; "Supple knows the girl to whom his rhapsody was addressed."

"What does he know of her?" asked Sidney, eagerly.

"That she is poor as poverty can make her, and proud as the devil. Why did not you observe how admirably he attacked her *fine* feelings? It was Supple who put on the Crier's habit, which had been cast aside by its original owner, whom I saw quit the house in a domino."

"I certainly considered the last appearance of that mask as another personage, but did not know it was Supple," replied Wentworth.

Wentworth. "Then that apparent compliment was an ironical attack upon the feelings of the female in question? How manly! how every way worthy of such a miscreant!"

"Did not he equally satirize my poor aunt, your whining widow?—yet you pass this over: and, now I recollect myself, and am recovered from your cutting strictures, pray how do you reconcile your theory with your practice? for *certainement*, your assiduities were of a very suspicious sort in the time of my uncle."

An honest blush suffused the cheek of our hero; and though he defended himself with some success, his internal feelings were by no means enviable. "I beseech you to speak with respect of your uncle's wife," he added, in the conclusion; "no man need blush at doing justice to personal charms, by silent admiration.—Mrs. Marnley is a woman of honour—I have admired her, but am not conscious

that my presumption ever led me to give her offence."

This, though certainly a well-meant evasion, was, in point of fact, correct—he never had offended by his presumption, though he had certainly displeased by indifference.

"But, tell me," continued Sidney, "what does Supple say of Mrs. Marnley's companion at the masquerade?"

"Faith, I did not attend. He said, there was a sort of mystery attached to her general appearance, which he was resolved upon solving; but I hate intricacies, so I did not inquire, though he tells me she is confoundedly handsome, and might, from her known situation, be purchaseable."

"Accursed wretch!" said Wentworth, his eyes flashing indignantly; "what a trafficker in human misery is this distinguished friend of your's, my lord! Forgive me, but I verily believe this odious reptile would barter his nearest kindred, if his

his purse could be benefited by the sacrifice. But I will demand an explanation on this head. I am strongly persuaded that this purveyor of crimes is better acquainted with a mystery which I am anxious to solve, than I had believed him to be.—Where is the creature?"

"You are wrong, Wentworth; there lives not a more generous patron of youth than my friend Supple. His knowledge of life is extensive, and his leniency is generously proportioned to the inexperience of those with whom it is his fate to associate. I declare to you, that I was on the verge of self-examination, and was almost afraid of the account, when he, with a liberality which must ever demand my gratitude, drew up a schedule, which has actually set me upon terms with myself, and by renewing my credit, has given me a confidence which tends greatly to increase my happiness."

"The serpent!" said Wentworth, rising,

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SAR

sing, and pacing the room. "Drop the subject, my lord; I cannot speak with patience of this destructive fiend; he will obscure every principle of virtue in your bosom, if not wholly subjugate them."

"You will yet treat me as a boy," replied lord Osterly; "but I am not so hacknied in the ways of men, as to analyze characters with the forethought of age; this I allow; and if you were less scrupulous, less alive to suspicion, which always distorts our perception, you, Wentworth, might be a happier man."

"I deny that," said Sidney. "Vanity out of the question, every man should own a principle of action; he may be less accurate in youth than in more advanced years; but if he has not *some* standard in his own bosom, some natural bias by which his conduct is regulated, he becomes a 'pipe for any fool to play at pleasure."

Mr. Hall, at this moment, presented a letter to our hero; it was from Mr. Carberry,

berry, requiring his opinion on a transfer he suggested as beneficial to their mutual trust.

Lord Osterly, whose sole purpose in this visit was to acquire the exact state of the Miss Beverlys' property, and who had not only been disappointed, but mortified by the general manner of his entertainer, now declared he must go home, as Maria must take his directions before she could leave town.

"I pity you," said Wentworth, smiling, "if you expect to derive happiness from an arrangement which you must always *deny* when in virtuous company, and can but feebly defend, even in your most lively moments."

"Adieu!" said his lordship; "you are a miserable, insensate animal; I leave you to your splenetic reflections."

The succeeding reflections of our horo deserved not the sarcasm of the peer.—Wentworth was now impelled to seek an indirect interview with Miss Sidney. If she

she was an acquaintance of Supple's, his interest in her situation must be short-lived; if, on the contrary, she was a victim marked out by this insatiate demon, it would be honourable to guard her from his machinations, by attending her footsteps: this might be done without danger to himself; it was not necessary that he should avow his intentions; he could look on, and thus save himself, while he protected a defenceless woman.

It had escaped our hero that Miss Sidney was the inmate of Mrs. Marnley.—Alas! with what readiness does a predisposed mind remove even formidable obstacles! The note of Mr. Carberry gave a pretext for calling in Grosvenor-street, and he resolved upon making this casualty subservient to his purpose.

Accordingly our hero was at the door of Mrs. Marnley in the shortest possible time. He was announced, and ushered into the drawing-room, without the servant's remarking that his mistress was absent.—

Wentworth,

Wentworth, in whom ease of manner was ever conspicuous, felt an awkwardness new to him, on perceiving a young and elegant-looking woman, who arose at his entrance; and folding a letter she had been reading, with a graceful curtsey, expressed her intention of apprizing Mrs. Marnley that she had a visitor.

"If Mrs. Marnley is at home, madam, I can wait her presence;" and he expressed by his manner he wished her to resume her seat.

A deep blush suffused the cheek of the lady; she looked as though, conscious of the rank she held in the family, she was fearful lest she was mistaken for a friend of Mrs. Marnley, and might consequently be doomed to experience a sensible mortification when the lady hostess made her appearance.

Sidney beheld her timidity with respect; yet he was anxious to ascertain if she was the female with whom he had conversed at lady Morbury's. "I think I have the honour of addressing the lady to whom I was somewhat troublesome on the evening of

lady

lady Morbury's masquerade," said Sidney, regarding his companion attentively.

"I was there, sir," said Miss Sidney; "but I was a total stranger to all the party; and was too much occupied by the newness of the scene to make any individual remark."

"Then you were highly liberal," said Sidney; "for I unconsciously blundered on an unpardonable rudeness. You were so good as to accept my apology; but the white domino, did not he distress you?"

Miss Sidney glanced lightly over the features of Wentworth; it seemed as if she was now assimilating the apology with the apologizer. Whether they blended correctly, it is not easy to say; but she instantly avowed the domino in question must have mistaken her for some other person; though she admitted his manner had made her uneasy, from having unnecessarily drawn her into a conspicuous situation.

"I am apt to think that the domino was correct, though your delicacy would lead you to disown it," said Sidney; "yet I can

can readily allow that he might give pain to an unassuming mind."

"Mrs. Marnley will be much disappointed when she learns you have waited, sir," said Miss Sidney, rising.

"I cannot suffer *you* to go, madam," said Wentworth; "let me draw the bell."

"I," and she paused—"I am in the habit of apprizing Mrs. Marnley in these cases, sir;" and she walked towards the door. The eyes of Sidney met those of his companion; tears coursed down the cheek of the fugitive girl; and our hero was left to compose his features, preparatory to his encountering the eagle gaze of the widow.

"At least," thought he, "this woman's mind is not moulded to bear the slights to which she is exposed. She is not correctly handsome, but she is highly engaging; and her eyes, as Felton (perhaps at the expence of his peace) has found, are beautifully expressive; and her dress simply chaste; in mourning too—perhaps some near tie, recently snatched from her,

her, has caused her to seek her present asylum. Why was she so anxious to be gone? Does she stand in awe of her employer, or did she consider me obtrusive?"

"Well, how are you to-day?" said Mrs. Marnley, as she entered the room, half leaning on the arm of Miss Sidney. "Only imagine my misery; I was playing with my dear little Fidele, and the ungrateful thing has bitten my finger; I declare I am quite in a tremor."

"If the wound is slight," replied Wentworth, smiling, "I would congratulate you, as I hope the pet will be discarded from your favour."

"What an unfeeling creature you are! I never knew such a savage; but I will not dismiss the dear little pet. Only look, Sidney," she continued, "see what Fidele has done," and she extended her hand.

Our hero, to whom this address appeared unusually familiar, arose in compliance to its import, when *Miss* Sidney, to whom it had actually been directed, re-assured him, by

by expressing her belief it would not prove a serious inconvenience.

"I thought *you* would say so," said Mrs. Marnley; "nothing but the superlative in horror alarms some minds. Ah! mon Dieu! Mr. Wentworth, did you really imagine I had used the freedom of calling you by your Christian name?"

"I certainly rose in obedience to that idea," replied Wentworth. "Our names are similar," he continued, turning to the abashed companion. "Allow me to give an opinion on this formidable wound," and he took the hand of Mrs. Marnley. "A mere scratch," said he, laughing. "Positively I wonder that you are conscious of any sensationfrom this;" and he restored the wounded hand to the half-vexed, yet somewhat flattered widow. "The superlative in horror," resumed Sidney; "do you really think that there is a woman, possessing mind, who reserves her feelings for certain gradations of terror?"

"I don't know; one says a thousand things

things without thought," said Mrs. Marnley, " when one is irritated."

"But why were you irritated?" asked our hero, in a voice of persuasive softness; "if from that silly scratch, you certainly want proper firmness; but as you have avowed your foible, this lady (and he bowed to Miss Sidney) will, perhaps, accept your apology."

Mrs. Marnley looked more than surprised—her features were flushed with resentment; yet her succeeding feelings caused her to suppress her natural character. She saw that Wentworth had placed the dependant upon a level with herself; and though she knew not how to forgive the association, she could not, with him, argue a point, which would, by his colouring, acquire a more copious distinction.

The immediate cause of this debate sat evidently oppressed by its personality; she had bowed to the liberal interference of Wentworth; but language seemed at this moment to deny its aid.

Our hero, presenting the letter of Mr. Carberry

Carberry to the irritated widow, asked her opinion of its contents.

Miss Sidney arose; she had unwillingly accompanied Mrs. Marnley to the drawing-room.

Wentworth saw her intention—"I beg you will not retire, madam," said he, "it is a matter of form; Mrs. Marnley's negative, or affirmative, will settle the point."

"I believe it is very advantageous," replied Mrs. Marnley; "indeed, Mr. Wentworth, I am afraid you have a great deal of trouble on my account. It is fortunate that Carberry is such a drudge in money transactions, or I should be truly concerned at the inconveniences to which I subject you."

"Not in the least. Mr. Carberry's knowledge of business in general is very extensive; and his prudence makes me an almost useless agent, though a very willing trust, for my friend."

"Do you know Harry Carberry, Mr. Wentworth?"

"I do not."

"Has

"Has Mr. Carberry any family?"

Miss Sidney looked as though she was well acquainted with the name; and while Wentworth attended the reply of Mrs. Marnley, his eyes were involuntarily directed towards her companion.

"Well, I am surprised at that. He is a very fine young man; quite above what one would expect to meet in a city character: but, to do him justice, he is not much addicted to habits of business. He is the best masquerader I ever knew; I strongly suspect he was the Crier at Morbury's, though his voice was greatly disguised, if it was him. He is the nephew of Mr. Carberry, and his intended heir."

"I should like to ascertain if the gentleman in question was the mask you name," replied Wentworth; "what his talents in that line may be, I have yet to discover; for certainly, as he only followed written instructions, there was no scope for originality."

"Why are you anxious to make him out,

out, Mr. Wentworth?" said Mrs. Marnley. "Is it that you wish to refute my assertion, or was the character so highly interesting to *you*, that your curiosity is excited to pursue the engaging subject?"

"You are severe," replied Wentworth; "I never, with harshness, refute the opinions of ladies; though my natural warmth, and, I might add, my respect for them, sometimes leads me to endeavour at making them true to themselves. Your last assertion is by no means an indefinite appeal to my candour. Men who move in a certain rank of life, are accustomed to the prominent cast of character which distinguishes that class. So little novelty is offered in the persons of a mixed assembly, that were it not for the introduction of new whims in furniture, new devices in lamps, chalked floors, &c. few men would venture to run the gauntlet so often. To avow that such trifles can collect a crowd, is to rate us very low in the rational scale; but where mere *amusement* is the object, when, from our

own experience, we cannot *hope* to be *entertained* by the company, it is then that the mere mechanism of the half-learned artist claims our transient attention, and we forget that we met for the express purpose of society. With these pre-arranged expectations, I entered the mansion of lady Morbury: I own I was in a degree disappointed; one or two characters were well supported; the Apollo, and his echoing satirist, were good masks; but the chief object that claimed my notice, was the lady who so delicately declined the assiduities of the white domino. In masquerade, almost every species of flattery gains a hearing; and, with those hacknied in its ways, the line seems natural; but I was delighted to perceive the effects of mere gallantry upon an unfashioned mind; and though it might cause a temporary uneasiness, I own I was gratified at discovering such an unusual character under a mask."

"Miss Sidney," said Mrs. Marnley, "surely you must acknowledge your obligations

ligations to Mr. Wentworth for this high eulogium; though really, when *he* bestows praise, I should doubt his sanity. How is the moon?"

"The compliments of gentlemen," said the aroused dependant, "are never overrated by me, madam. I wish I could feel as indifferent to sarcasm as to gallantry; my happiness would certainly be encreased;" and rising, with an air of offended delicacy, she hastily quitted the room.

"Very just, an admirable reproof," said Sidney, as he stood gazing after the wounded girl. "So this is the mode of treatment for which *you* think your slave should be grateful?" said Wentworth, addressing Mrs. Marnley. "She partakes of the hospitalities of your house, perhaps in a degree above your menials; she is forced to bear the tax of your society, for she was engaged as your *companion;* and because you have the *power* to make such an arrangement, you forget that you are a woman—a happy, *independent* woman, compe-

tent to shield a defenceless fellow-being. Shame! shame upon a power so perverted!"

"Good Heavens, sir! what provision can one possibly make against such absurdly refined feelings? The natural bent of my disposition is cheerful; I say a thousand things without thought; and if people will take offence at mere badinage, I cannot be accountable for their whims."

"I am, perhaps, presumputous," replied Sidney; "there is in my manner an unguarded warmth, which frequently throws me upon the generosity of my friends. Your sex (I speak of you collectively) are dear to my heart. I love you, as the most perfect work of creative mercy—not a foible that obscures your original worth, that does not awaken my interest, and, I may add, my regret. I would not dictate to you what is proper in all cases of adventitious superiority; the tissue of life is so woven with sorrows and with joys, splendour is so transient, and poverty is so often chased by an "all-seeing eye," that nothing but supineness

supineness can make us permanently vain. Ask your own heart, if fate had made *you* the dependant, could you have borne the taunt you so thoughtlessly uttered just now, and that before a man an almost stranger?"

"Why, positively, I think I should have laughed at it," said Mrs. Marnley; "or perhaps my vanity might have tempted me to place it to another account."

Wentworth smiled languidly; his vanity did not lead him to comment upon the remark of Mrs. Marnley, though it is probable he comprehended its inference. "There is no possible way of transferring feelings accurately," he resumed; "you *think* you could laugh at insult, because you are placed above its most degrading attacks. We are all debtors to those whom poverty benights—our suffrage, our clemency, our sympathy, is their due;

"It is what the happy to the unhappy owe."

But unless we pay our proportion, with a strict regard to what is expected of us—if

our quota, like a public donation, stands conspicuous only for its ostentation, in place of soothing by its delicate dedication, it becomes a sort of forgery upon benevolence, and the effort deserves not praise."

"Would you insinuate that praise is our due, Mr. Wentworth? I cannot believe you. Surely your system of spontaneous sympathy would disown a reward, however large our bounty."

"Correctly speaking, we deserve none," said Wentworth; "our utmost exertions prove, upon comparison, such *poor* semblances of *eternal* bounty, such futile emblems of imitation, that I know no better lesson for human vanity than sober reflection. Benevolence is often attributed to characters to whom the feeling is unknown. I have no idea that *actual* charity ever transpires: the obliged may, in some cases, pour forth the overflowings of a grateful heart; but that bond which sympathy draws between delicate minds rarely expresses itself in language; in fact, to express

press obligation lowers the understanding; all customary ebullitions become weaker by repetition ; and gratitude, of all others, soonest loses its value. It is easy to become a pauper upon humanity ; while to sustain our dignity, without arrogance, or an insensibility to those kindnesses which claim our best feelings, is a task rarely performed."

"But in the present case, Mr. Wentworth, how would it be possible for a poor thoughtless being like your friend, to conduct herself so as to deserve this exalted definition, this internal solace?" asked Mrs. Marnley.

"By the very definition you have given," said Wentworth, "by making it an internal consideration. Let all your actions bear an appeal to your heart, an impartial appeal: that thoughtlessness which you avow is ridiculous; it would be folly in a mere girl, it is worse in you. My dear Mrs. Marnley," added Wentworth, rising and taking her hand, "never forget that you are

are of a class from whom all that is amiable and conciliating is expected. As a woman, you may be simply erring—I trust never egregiously so: go to the woman you have wounded, and, as her protectress, avow your regret; prove to her, that the inadvertence of a lively disposition bears no comparison to the graceful recantation a generous mind may with dignity assert;" and, with a hasty adieu, our hero quitted the astonished widow.

The zeal of a man whose principles are correct, will, in matters of mere business, give him a consequence highly advantageous to his character; but where the same feeling is conspicuous in domestic occurrences, when a young, and, forgive me, reader, if I add, a personable man, carries this noble principle of his nature into those ever-rising contingencies that shadow and enliven our existence, there can be no doubt of his sentiments being estimated in a degree. To convince by arguments, however eloquent, is not always easy; yet such

such is the power of man, such is the interest which their *real* zeal inspires, that I am persuaded, if men of sense were sedulous to promote the happiness of women, by making them rational rather than amusing, they would find them not only teachable, but grateful creatures. I allow that the *mind* should be *prepared* for this latter education, and that a system of opsimathy, in matters of science, rarely produces perfection. This is no argument against my assertion. The botanist, does he rear *all* the flowers of his garden? The physician, are *all* his cares blessed with success? Or the sacred teacher, are *all* his *sanctioned* authorities received with that grateful submission which their divine institute demands? assuredly not. Then, while we regret the faded plant, and its correct emblem, the perished scions of mortality; while we lament, with an *affiliating* tenderness, those imperfect natures on whom religion makes not its holy impression, let us not turn from the improvable mind, nor

leave the "weeds to grow up with the tares," lest the "tale be told," and they be "no more seen."

In throwing personal beauty into the foregoing digression, I may stand implicated at the bar of criticism; but there is another bar by which, should my opinions be reviewed, I feel that I shall stand acquitted—I mean the ladies; they will not disown the attraction of personal appearance; and it would be well, if, amongst those whom they consider to possess this charm, they could recollect that *mind* accompanied this recommendatory grace; in that case, I am persuaded they would become converts to intellect, in place of exterior advantages.

Whether the lecture of our hero effected any improvement in Mrs. Marnley remains to be discovered; and as we have previously avowed that lady was not gifted with a strong mind, it would be inconsiderate in our readers to be too sanguine.

Sidney found himself in Oxford-street,

 before

before he had reflected that his plans for this morning were designed to be in a contrary direction. He had been so absorbed in the subject we have related, his feelings, naturally acute, had been wrought up so powerfully, that, almost unconsciously to himself, he leaned against the pallisades of one of those enclosed mansions at the western extremity of the street. While pausing, half irresolute whether to return, and seek of Mrs. Marnley the connexions, abilities, and exact situation of Miss Sidney, preparatory to his requiring for her the protection of lady Beverly, these thoughts had actually passed in succession, when the gate of the entrance near which he stood flung open, and Mr. Supple issued forth.

"Ah! she knows him," said he, mentally, and a transient distrust stole over his mind.

"Mr. Wentworth," said Supple, advancing, "you look ill; do me the honor of accepting my arm;" and he placed himself by the side of our hero.

Sidney declined the offer, placing to the

warmth of the day the apparent, yet temporary agitation of his frame.

Supple continued to walk at his elbow.

"Have you heard any thing of Mr. Durweston?" said Wentworth, addressing his companion.

Supple replied in the negative.

"You said that his wife was in some inferior situation," resumed Sidney; "can you tell me the name of the family?"

"I wish I could relieve your generous anxiety," replied Supple. "Forgive me, Mr. Wentworth, I participate in that suspense which you seem to feel so sensibly. Yes, sir, none but a Wentworth could have inserted that manly, yet affecting appeal, to the wandering Durweston."

"I do not understand you, sir; I know not to what you allude," said our hero, warmly.

"If I am in error, I ask pardon," continued Supple; "the advertisement appeared to me so applicable to Mr. Durweston; your continuing in town, and the evident sensibility

sensibility of your feelings; these combining circumstances formed so probable a chain in my mind, that I took the liberty of interesting myself in one or two points, which I hoped would expedite your wishes."

"*You* have, sir; be explicit, I beg; what have you done?"

"There are adamantine hearts, on which casualties make no impression," resumed Supple.

"I entreat of you, sir, to be concise," replied Sidney; and, blushing for the rudeness of his retort, he added "as I really have an engagement at some distance;" and he beguiled his consciously interested features by regarding his watch attentively.

"I would not detain you for the world," said Supple, bowing. "Mr. Wentworth, I wish you good morning," and he was hastening away when our hero detained him.

"Is Durweston in London?"

"I cannot say."

"How

"How could I trace his former residence?"

"I am unfortunately a stranger to the mode in which Mr. Wentworth would chuse to receive information;" and again he was departing, when Wentworth, who knew his character, and that to yield to this artful hypocrite was to leave him at liberty to extend his villanies, with an air of indifference resumed:—

"This is similar to your former affected ignorance of this family, sir: your evasion will not engage my credibility; nay, I am persuaded some motive, inconsistent with fairness, makes you thus mysterious. I shall trace it, no doubt; and it is perhaps as well that I gain the fact by other means;" and bowing haughtily to Supple, he proceeded down this renowned thoroughfare, purposing to call upon Mr. Carberry.

Though fashion presents so many *elegant* modes of conveyance through the streets of the metropolis, viz. a barouche and four,

a cur-

a curricle, a buggy, or a dog-cart, there are yet to be found men who can make a few calls, by the simplest, and not least rational method of walking. The morning was intensely warm, and Wentworth felt its inconvenience. A matter of pleasure would not have retarded him, if he had been disposed to join in gaiety; and as he had so recently volunteered his advice, for the benefit of Mrs. Marnley's moral character, there could be no excuse for his delaying the arrangement of her worldly interest; as such, it was to the counting-house of Mr. Carberry that our hero now directed his steps. Desirous of avoiding the reflected heat of the enclosed streets, he took a circuit hitherto unknown to him; and by that perceptive geography which the intelligent mind imbibes without study, had arrived at the ascent of the hill which leads to Sadler's Wells, when the carriage of lord Osterly, appointed for travelling, and drawn up on one side of the road, attracted his attention. He looked into the vehicle;

cle; the step was down, and a man-servant was playing with a French lap-dog, its only inhabitant.

"Where is your lord?" asked Sidney, addressing the man.

"My lord was at home when we came away," said the man; "but he sets off for Brighton to-morrow, sir."

Wentworth bowed, and went on. It now occurred to him, that his lordship's mistress was the cause of the present detention of the carriage. His conjecture proved just; for in a few moments, a very handsome-looking, but evidently unfortunate woman, turning hastily from a person with whom she had been speaking, brushed past our hero, and, jumping into the carriage, was driven off with the utmost expedition. The reflections which would have suggested themselves were superseded by a surprise that gave sensible pain to the bosom of Wentworth. He had followed the companion of the child of error; and upon looking under her bonnet, to discover what sort

sort of person she was, he beheld his fair applicant, the cousin of his favourite servant.

"Good Heavens!" said Sidney, "is it possible? why did you talk with that woman?" and he fixed his eye upon the countenance of the trembling girl.

"Oh! sir," said the alarmed creature, "she—she is my wretched sister."

"Wretched indeed!" echoed Wentworth; "but are you conscious, my good girl, that there is much danger in your being seen in her company?"

"Yes, sir, I know there is; but she begged just to see me for a moment; and I thought, perhaps, if I told her that her father had been almost dying, and all upon her account, she would be persuaded to come home again."

"I am afraid she has disappointed your hopes," said Sidney. "Has she been long with lord Osterly?"

"Do you know him, sir?" replied the girl, with honest warmth. "Oh, for God's sake, tell

tell him how miserable he has made us: I am sure he must listen to such a good man."

"My poor girl," said Wentworth, "these are not cases in which men like advice. I know his lordship; and for the sake of your poor father, and, if possible, to spare your worthy heart, I will certainly apprize him of the distress he occasions. But tell me in few words, did lord Osterly take your sister from the roof of her parent?"

"No, indeed, sir," resumed the blushing girl, "my sister's beauty has been her ruin: she went away with an officer two years ago; but a gentleman, who respects my poor father, found her out, and brought her home some months afterwards, and we all thought she would be good; but somehow she made acquaintance with a person, who persuaded her to go to lord Osterly. She went out one night, about half a year ago, and we could not find her for many weeks, and then it was Philip that discovered her. He tried all he could to make her return; and he has great cou-

rage;

rage; so he would see my lord, and he asked him how he could be so wicked as to take away an honest man's child; and he added, moreover, that if his poor uncle was as strong as he was once, he would soon make his lordship give her up; for you see, sir, my father was a soldier:—but all would not do. I am surprised at it; but it seems my lord praised Philip for his gallantry; and then he called Maria into the room, and told her she might go to her father, or stay with him. So I suppose she loves him very much," said the artless casuist, "for she declared she would not leave my lord."

"It is not love, but pride, which makes your lost sister persist in her wickedness," replied Wentworth; "the idleness in which lord Osterly supports her, the use of money, and the command of a carriage, at present blind this very criminal young woman. She will ultimately fall into misery, there can be no doubt of it: she does not appear to have any goodness left; while

while you, my good girl, as the wife of some honest man, will live to be a credit to your father."

"That's what Philip says, sir; there is nothing to envy Maria for; she has a great deal of money, and she wanted me to take some to my father, but I told her that he would not touch it; and, indeed, I was forced almost to swear about that note you gave me, sir; for my father would have it that Maria had sent it to him."

"Your father is a virtuous man, child," said Sidney, his heart visibly oppressed by the innocent elucidation. "Philip was always worthy of regard; I shall have great pleasure in serving him; and if you know any woman he would wish to make his wife, tell me, and I will serve him;" and he looked towards his humble companion, with a smiling, yet penetrating glance.

"He never told *me* that he wished to marry any woman," said the trembling girl; "but perhaps he has seen somebody in the country; you know best, sir."

"No,"

"No," said Wentworth, smiling, "I think you are better acquainted with his wishes; and if you repeat what I have said, I doubt not but he will understand you."

"Thank you, sir," resumed the encouraged girl; "I hope we shall see Philip to-day;" and, curtseying, she entered the fore court of a small, but neat habitation.

Wentworth cast his eye over the dwelling, it was not exactly the sort of abode in which he should have supposed his humble friend resided; yet, as he looked around him, and observed the written indications placed in most of the windows, he concluded that, like those, it was a lodging-house.

"This poor girl suspected *my* motive on our first interview," thought he; "this accounts for her forcible, yet very natural exclamation—if you are an honest man! what a poor emanation of virtue, to spare the defenceless! Placed in that sphere of rationality which gives us capacity to reflect, and to look forward, who would pause

to

to discover the correct line?" and as he entered the counting-house of Mr. Carberry, near the Royal-Exchange, something like a twinge of conscience wrung his bosom; for she whose immediate interest had brought him to this door had nearly proved the syren who would have destroyed this happy self-possession, this blissful reserve of reasoning upon *right*, because *wrong* has not pervaded the undefiled sanctuary of impartial justice.

To the inquiries of our hero, the servant replied that Mr. Carberry would be home in less than an hour.

Sidney took a seat in the office, which was unoccupied, save only by a youth, who was engaged at a desk. Wentworth had looked around him, and was silently applauding the apparent order and method of the mercantile system. He had taken a few volumes from the book-shelves, and, on perusing their titles, had justly determined the life of a British merchant might not only be honourable and useful, but likewise an intellectual one, when

when a loud post-rap rung through the hall, and in a few moments the porter entered, and laying a letter upon the desk, begged the young lad who was writing to give that to Mr. Durweston when he came in. Our hero started at the name. The man withdrew. The eye of Wentworth glanced over the superscription; it was evidently a female hand. Exulting internally that this simple fact would lead to a *denouement* with the object of his search, he yet paused upon the propriety of questioning the young man, who continued intent upon his ledger.

At length, a curiosity which his motives justified determined him in favour of a communication with his companion. "Durweston is not a common name," said Wentworth, addressing the lad; "I have the pleasure of knowing a gentleman of that name; pray is this Mr. Durweston a young man?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy; "that is, he is under thirty, I should suppose."

"An Englishman?" asked Sidney.

"I really

"I really cannot tell sir. Mr. Durweston has not been long in the office; Mr. Henry recommended him to Mr. Carberry; and he is so retired in his manner, that we do not hold much conversation."

"It is the same, I have no doubt," replied Sidney. "I shall probably see him before I go."

"It is past his usual hour," resumed the youth, regarding the dial. "I believe Mr. Henry said he would make up the letter-bags to-night; and, in that case, he will not return."

"Then you will forward this letter to him," said Wentworth, holding the epistle to the view of the young merchant.

"We do not know his residence, sir; he will get it to-morrow."

Wentworth looked disappointed; his sanguine heart had expected the most copious elucidation. Throwing himself into a seat, he again gave way to his reflections. It must be a proud resentment which withheld Durweston from noticing his advertisement

tisement. Again, might not his time be so fully occupied as to prevent his looking into the diurnal prints?

"Do you take in the newspapers daily?" asked Sidney of his informant.

"Yes, sir, all the papers."

Again our hero was silent. At this moment the door opened, and a very elegant figure of a man entered. He was young, handsome, and had an air of fashion, which appeared perfectly natural to him. Addressing our hero with easy politeness, he begged to know if he could have the honour of supplying the place of his uncle, Mr. Carberry, who was unexpectedly called a few miles from London.

Our hero now recognised the handsome Harry Carberry, whom Mrs. Marnley had so eloquently eulogized. Wentworth gave his name; and stating his purposed business as a money adjustment on account of his trust, he proceeded to talk upon indifferent subjects. Mr. Carberry seemed pleased with his guest, avowed himself gra-

tified by an opportunity of being known to Mr. Wentworth; he had heard his uncle speak of him in terms which had excited a wish to be introduced to him.

Our hero, with whom prejudice never existed, could not refrain from contrasting the natural manners and occupied mind of his new acquaintance, with the volatile and useless sprigs of nobility with whom his mornings' hours had been wasted.

Mrs. Marnley had asserted that Harry Carberry was not addicted to habits of business. Wentworth saw a complete refutation of the slander, in the routine which the young merchant pursued, who, apologizing to his visitor, made some minutes in a folio volume, read a few letters, and then turning to the desk on which Durweston's letter was laying, seized it hastily, and regarding the address for a moment, Wentworth thought he perceived a glow to heighten his features; but placing the letter in his pocket-book, he seemed conscious of his unguarded manner; and endeavoured

deavoured to draw off the attention of our hero, by remarking that the drudgery of a counting-house must appear extraordinary to a man of Mr. Wentworth's habits.

"I will not allow the term," said Sidney; "there must be a degree of activity in every well-directed system; and that of a British merchant I consider not only as the best regulated, but the proudest boast of our island."

"It has its claims to respect, no doubt," replied Carberry; "yet like every other flourishing community, it is subject to a certain species of contumely from the hereditary idle."

"Perhaps so," said Wentworth; "but allow me to ask if 'censure is not praise' in some cases? this is an era for impotent satire, and who would deny the hungry a meal?"

"I own myself to be invulnerable in this point," replied Carberry; "but my uncle, whose unvarnished manners would contradict such a belief, he, of all men, is most

most wounded by jests upon civic habits; he carries his prejudices very far, and would not move an inch westward to gain a peerage: thus he remains chained to Broad-street. Perhaps you will do me the honour of taking dinner with me, Mr. Wentworth; I must be in the city till eight o'clock this evening."

Our hero, who really liked the manner of his new friend, was obligated to decline the pleasure of his invitation; he was engaged at home to a particular friend, and had half promised to go to Vauxhall in the evening.

"Then we shall meet," said Carberry; "I am under a sort of engagement to sir Charles Felton to join him there."

"Do you know Felton? he is my most esteemed friend; it is he who dines with me to-day: will you meet him in Park-street, and partake of a bachelor's dinner?"

"Not to-day," replied Carberry; "but Mr. Wentworth shall not have cause to complain

complain of my tardiness. I am never anxious to increase my *acquaintance*, though ambitious of acquiring a superior friend."

Wentworth bowed to the compliment with all his heart; and though the open character of Carberry impelled a belief that he would answer any consistent question he might put relative to Durweston, that very candour repressed his curiosity; they should meet again in the course of the evening, and he was then fully resolved upon asking the residence of Durweston, if no more. If mutual prepossession be an essential in the commencement of friendship, and I believe it does not admit of a doubt, the first meeting of Wentworth and Carberry seemed to promise a very permanent basis for this most exalted intercourse between man and man.

Our hero parted from the young merchant with warm expressions of regard, and throwing himself into a hackney-coach, arrived in Park-street without further adventure.

Wentworth was agreeably surprised to find the faithful Philip ready to attend his entrance. "Ah, Bevans," said our hero, "when did you arrive?"

"About two hours ago, sir; I set off directly I got your letter."

"You did well; how did you leave my father?"

"Sir Ormsby has had a slight attack of the gout, sir; but lady Beverly and doctor Firmor have almost brought him about again. I have a letter for you, sir, from lady Beverly; but sir Ormsby bid me tell you, that if you could not settle your business in a few days, he should come to London with sir George and lady Beverly, who talk of leaving the Hall for a few weeks."

"I almost think the change would be beneficial to my father," replied Wentworth, taking the letter of lady Beverly from his servant. "I can dispense with your assistance to-day, Philip; you must be anxious to see your uncle; go, my good fellow, and see the poor old man."

Bevans looked his grateful thanks, and withdrew; when Hall, entering with a letter in his hand, presented the long-expected answer to his advertisement. The epistle of lady Beverly was instantly cast on one side, and our hero, with an impatience indescribable, broke the seal, and read what follows:—

"*To A. B.*

"The conciliating purport of A. B.'s communication is fully appreciated by the person who considers himself to be the party addressed. The advertisement did not meet the eye of his correspondent until a few hours since. Circumstances of a more promising nature have lately opened to the objects of his solicitude: for himself, he begs to observe, that *he* never had any claim upon the generosity of A. B. or his father; nor ever made a necessitous appeal to any human being, upon his own account. As a man, he disclaims commiseration; he may regret that his PRESENT rank

rank in life does not entitle him to avail himself of a higher distinction. A. B.'s correspondent has submitted the advertisement to the ostensible person concerned, who, though highly gratified to discover qualities so estimable in a young and independant man, begs leave to decline the implied services."

"Here then is misery for my too late relenting father!" sighed Wentworth. "Durweston, I know not how your disinterested nature has bound you to the fortunes of Anna Tracey's orphan; if she is your wife, her advancement is assured by your own; if friendship only dictated your zeal, what pity that it met so ungracious a reception!"

As the succeeding thought brought the disappointment of sir Ormsby before the mental view of our hero, all that filial love which so strongly animated his character glowed in his bosom, and suggested some method which, by its gentle force,

force, should compel Durweston to meet him as a friend; in which event, all future consequences must be propitious. Seizing his pen, he wrote the following advertisement:—

"A. B. honours pride in all its laudable bearings, but he thinks the term admits of very limited scope; he will not trace its latitude, but simply state, that FRIENDSHIP disowns so ignoble a feeling; and unless his correspondent relaxes in his proud rejection, and putting ALL other considerations out of question, gives him the pleasure of a personal meeting, he will be obligated to rescind an impression which *has* given him a most pleasurable anticipation, namely, that an exalted mind not only disclaims resentment, but embraces every *consistent* opportunity of giving peace to the discomfited and relenting. A line, addressed as heretofore, will be anxiously expected."

Dispatching this for insertion, he re-perused the answer of Durweston; saw in its manly

manly sentiments all that his imagination could wish in a friend; and, to guard against irreverent reflections, he resorted to the letter of lady Beverly.

The lively Grace wrote in a happy style; she depicted the transient cloud which had lowered over Adderfield, as wholly dispelled. Her uncle, though occasionally impatient at the absence of his son, had almost resolved upon accompanying sir George and herself to London—a project which she was persuaded would prove serviceable to him.

"You would smile, my dear Sid," said her ladyship, in one part of her letter, "if you could hear dear sir Ormsby stating his expected inconveniences in this London jaunt; he is greatly pleased to think that the town will not be so smoking as in winter. He has promised to sojourn in Grosvenor-square, the situation being more open than Park-street; but his real motive, I am saucy enough to believe, a certain conviction that your bachelor

chelor residence is not conducted with that preciseness and comfort to which he has habituated himself. We are not anxious to develop his sentiments, being resolved upon holding him to his engagement; so do not infringe upon our determination. Dear Louisa is gaining spirits—Fanny somewhat moody; they both absolutely reject our escort this season. 'It is too late,' said lady Layton; and they actually and *bona fide* assent to her opinion. Tell dear lady John that she must take compassion on my rustic ignorance, and give me the suffrage of her countenance upon my *debut*; but this is unnecessary; she has already written me upon the subject, and I am quite impatient to meet her sisterly affection."

The communication of lady Beverly gave our hero much satisfaction. He was now so resolved upon remaining in London until he could attain further knowledge of Durweston, that her ladyship's presence, and the expected visit of sir Ormsby, were cir-

cumstances which not only gave pleasure in themselves, but might tend to facilitate any purposed munificence which his father might intend in favour of him whom he had degraded.

Though no conclusive elucidation had reached the ear of Sidney respecting the man he was so anxious to serve, yet this morning had given a clue, which put him in possession of the power to act; for if the Durweston he sought was the friend of Carberry, he had no doubt of acquiring from him some particulars, which would enable him to break through formal restraints; and he resolved that if his present advertisement did not effect his wishes, he would address the proud stranger by name, and depute Carberry to deliver it into his hands. Thus fixed in his determination, our hero dispatched his toilet; and in an equality of spirits which diffused itself into his external appearance, he met sir Charles Felton, with a gaiety peculiarly suited to the guest whom he entertained.

CHAP. IV.

And whether there be any such or no, I cannot well tell; yet I heare saye, some young gentlemen of ours count it their shame to be counted learned; and, perchance, they count it their shame to be counted honest also.

ASCHAM'S QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Now whether to consider the blunt satire of the good Rodger Ascham as consoling or degrading, is the question. Are we to be consoled that we are not more erring than we were some centuries since; or to deplore that time has not divested us (partially) of our errors? I leave this to casuists in the ways of men to decide, determined in my own mind, being a lover of happiness, and looking to the fair side of things,

things, that my paper horizon shall bear a ponderal balance in favour of the good. Yet I will depict and write *at* glaring follies, not in the hope of reforming the frivolous—the task were vain; but, at least, when the routine of your *present* eccentricities have been scanned, it leads *projectors* to exercise their genius; thus *you* will be led into *new* foibles, and I, your futile mirror, shall find new subject for my pen.

Though the conviviality of an *Englishman's* table may be less boisterous than that of a sister kingdom, there is a cheerfulness attached to the use of wine that "gladdens the heart of man," and makes him more communicative than in his less temperate moments. Sir Charles Felton, whose cheerfulness was almost proverbial, proved the truth of my remark; distinct from inebriety, his unguarded temper divulged a fact, which our hero attended to with fixed attention.

"My dear Wentworth," said the baronet, "it now remains in the power of A

WOMAN

WOMAN to bind your giddy friend for life. I have written to Miss Sidney, and offered her my hand. You will call it a hasty decision; but I have, in confidence, gained a few essential particulars from a friend; her only crime, in the eye of the world, is poverty; that I have the power to obviate; and if she returns my affection, I shall be the happiest fellow in existence."

"Indeed!" said Wentworth, seriously. "I confess you surprise me, upon so transient an acquaintance, to make an offer so serious. Surely, Felton, your usual good judgment has deserted you in this particular; you could never be the mere slave to personal attraction; would you not wish to learn the character, the bent of the disposition of the woman you are to live with through life? Have not you been premature?"

"No, I think not. In the first place, I have been her silent admirer above a month. I did not address her until a few days since; she repulsed my presumption, and,

and, with the aid and concurrence of a friend, who knows her well, I attacked her at the masquerade. You know what followed. Since which I have made a point of attending Mrs. Marnley's morning walks in the Park; here I have had an opportunity of discovering a thousand amiable traits in her character; and being an enemy to long danglings, by which I was *once* seriously deceived, I took counsel of my past feelings, and, on comparison, found that the present prospect was too fair to be trifled with. As such, my fate is in her hands. I own my mind is discomposed while this hideous suspense hangs over me; but I have the firmest reliance on her candour, her integrity."

Our hero regarded sir Charles with a look of indescribable scrutiny, and it was, perhaps, at this moment, the personal advantages of his friend appeared more than ordinarily attractive; not that Wentworth believed it possible a woman of sense could make a decision so important in favour of

exterior

exterior only; but justice demanded of our attached Sidney, that the liberality of sir Charles's offer, the genuine warmth with which he placed his future happiness at the disposal of an unportioned woman, common justice required at his hands a proportioned approbation; and as he gazed on the animated features of the baronet, he believed it impossible a disengaged woman could reject a man so every way unexceptionable. Nay, that very haste which he had so recently condemned, now appeared an amiable species of sincerity. "We islanders are certainly phlegmatic animals," thought our Englishman; "we are methodical to an excess;" and his reflections led him to remember, that HE could have followed up the fair impression which Miss Sidney's manner had effected on his mind: "and here," thought Sidney, "the man whom *I* introduced has foiled me. Had I any intention of the kind?" asked the heart of our hero. "Poh! it was only a wound *en passant*; and if it *had* been a serious one, did not

not my friend, in *confidence*, impart his views to me? Pure love would disown what honour could not ratify."

"I sigh for a home," said sir Charles Felton, as, with our hero, he entered the drawing-room, which commanded a view of Hyde Park. "An unsocial heart would look around this apartment, and find, in its taste and elegance, objects which may employ his vacant hours. I pity the wretch who can be happy alone; nay, so far do I carry my prejudices against bachelors, that I actually hate a party composed only of men. Understand me, Sidney, our *tête-à-tête* dinner was just in unison with my feelings. Here I could unbend, and talk about what was nearest my heart; but the coarse revelry of a *bon-vivant's* table is my aversion. Whether I have arrived at that age in which cynical opinions gain ground, I know not; but I am certainly less than ever disposed to mix in every-day society."

"You are my senior by a few years," replied Wentworth, "yet I have anticipated

ted those sentiments you avow—a happy domestic home is a terrestrial heaven. The phantoms which, on our first appearance in a certain rank of life, usually fascinate, and take us from ourselves, are such glaring deceptions, that the infancy of reason can alone palliate our wilful blindness. Very few of those with whom I set out on my *entré* but have catered for themselves, and with such a disregard to consequences, that the pre-eminence of their follies can alone distinguish them. I make my calls occasionally; yet, strange to tell, had I wife, with the exception of one or two, I would not degrade her by an introduction to them. The world, however, gives them countenance; and, in fact, where fortune smiles, justice is too often impotent."

"My countrywomen are infinitely more correct in their morals than your Englishwomen," resumed sir Charles; "few of those atrocious secessions from decency, which are so frequent here, stain our annals."

"You

"You are right, Felton; yet I remark that an Irishman seldom marries his countrywóman."

"In truth, we would not object to it," said the baronet, laughing, "if we might marry the girls in our own way; but it is the mothers, the aunts, or any other matronly dame, in trust, who courts *for* an Irish girl:—she reads the *pedigree*, and we are to affix the jointure. Their keenness is wonderful: I had nearly signed away my *purchase*-money, when a coronet was introduced, the *pedigree* re-read, and my two thousand per annum rejected for this said bauble, and, I conclude, a little higher bidding."

"What a traffic, and what an escape!" said Sidney. "Was the lady passive in this arrangement?"

"Why, seriously speaking, she stood in that neutral sort of situation, that when she *did* make her decision, I could not accuse her of inconstancy, for she had never allowed me the honour of imparting my sentiments

ments and expectations on this subject: yet I own I was vexed—the thing had been talked of. She is now married, and, I have heard, is a very happy wife."

"My dear Charles," said Sidney, "never cast a censure upon the *neutral* feelings of your countrywomen. What sort of lovers must ye be, who would submit to a system so absurd as that of marrying a woman with whom you have scarcely conversed, who reckons upon the dowry you assign to her use, as the essential matter in point, and takes you, like an odd fixture in an advantageous lease, because one cannot be attained without the other?"

"I look back gratefully," resumed the baronet; "your remark, though impertinent, is just; yet, I am persuaded, I could point out half a-dozen young fellows of my acquaintance, who have sat down married men, without exactly knowing how the miracle has been wrought."

"All inequalities, whether in rank or age, bring their certain disappointments," said

said Sidney: "so bigoted am I to a theoretic view, which my fancy incessantly pourtrays, that though love might wound my heart, I never could give that heart to the keeping of a woman who would not own to me that she valued it; nay, more, she must not deny to give me a confession of the progress I made in her affections; and though you laugh at me, I think this might be done without offending her delicacy."

"Your presumption will meet its just humiliation, Wentworth; I beseech you never again suffer impudence to pass as an exclusive attribute of my country; for if you ever bring your theory to bear, it must be by dint of this same overwhelming quality, against which delicate minds are so intuitively guarded, that I foresee your shadowy system must fail."

"I think not," replied Sidney, smiling; "*persuasion* is actually agreeable in these cases; and the woman whom I loved well enough to address in its language, would not only yield to my solicitation in this respect,

respect, but own *her* gratification in doing so."

"Vanity, thy name is man!" said sir Charles, walking to the balcony which hung over the little garden beneath. "Be sure, Sid, when you bring a wife, upon your own plan, into this unique dwelling, give me due notice; I shall be most anxious to see her; though I much doubt your being able to find so docile, and, forgive me if I add, so simple a creature."

"Then here will I remain," continued our hero, "a solitary projector. If this furniture could speak, what soliloquies might it betray! It may not be usual for a bachelor to own his feelings; but I am persuaded, that unless his nature is cast in a most repulsive mould, his powers of independence increase his internal disquiet.—, I speak not of confirmed bachelors, who can rarely arrive at this distinction but by the sacrifice of every genuine grace of their characters. If I make a new purchase, and own a transient approbation of its utility, my

my opinion is neither established or opposed by any voice whose sentiments I value. Perhaps a male friend drops in, and ridicules my taste; or it may so happen that my servant echoes *my* opinion; in neither of these cases is my vanity soothed, or my independence certain. No, it is the union of mind, the residing with a creature whose reason mixes in the most minute concern of one's life. If our opinions are in unison, we hail the propitious similarity—if they differ (and it must infallibly happen), a convert is to be made; and the delight of yielding to the soft reasoner, or the no less gratifying pleasure of convincing, by *persuasive* means, that the idea was erroneous. I rely so much upon this my *favourite* medium, it is so applicable to the nature and character of woman, that I wonder, and am disgusted, when I find a belief in its influence is not generally accredited by men."

"How wears the night?" asked sir Charles, drawing his watch; "nearly ten o'clock. I ordered

ordered my carriage to be here at a quarter past ten. Wentworth, you will go?"

"Certainly," replied Sidney; "I have a new motive for wishing to do so since the morning."

"Well, that pleases me," replied sir Charles, "for I am getting confoundedly fidgety as time goes over: your motive may enable you to amuse yourself; I, in anticipating Miss Sidney's answer, and reflecting on your provoking domestic sketch, shall find room for meditation, even to madness."

Wentworth laughed at his disciple languidly; he, to use the expression of the baronet, "was fidgety." He was impatient to know the fate of his friend; yet somewhat too sensitively alive to the decision, which he could scarcely doubt must be favourable.

The carriage of sir Charles was announced. Our hero taking his station in one corner, and the baronet in the other, musing, and almost silent, were conveyed to Vauxhall.

Vauxhall. There are few places of public amusement which do not awaken in the bosom of the moralist strong feelings of commiseration, frequently mixed with disgust. Wentworth and his friend had imparted their mutual observations on the many wretched creatures who mixed in the fairy scene, when lord Osterly, Mr. Supple, and a small party of ladies and gentlemen, made a line before our hero, and with all that interesting succession of nothings which usually elicit themselves amongst people in a certain rank, the fashionable jargon commenced.

"How excessively warm it is this evening, Mr. Wentworth!" said lady Linburne. "Perhaps *you* can satisfy my doubts—will Mrs. Marnley be here or no?"

"I really cannot say," replied Sidney; "I am unacquainted with her plans."

"You are a hypocrite," said Miss Charlotte Macleod, "but *we* are not to be deceived so easily."

"Forgive me," whispered lord Osterly to

to our hero; "but I must leave you in charge of these shrews for a little while;" and, without waiting the assent of Wentworth, he took the arm of Supple, and turned down another walk.

With some reluctance our hero fell into the party of lady Linburne. The rude desertion of lord Osterly was termed by his lenient judges, "one of his whims;" and Miss Macleod declared, that they ought to consider themselves fortunate in having met Mr. Wentworth and his friend, as it was more than probable that Osterly would decamp *sans ceremonie*.

"He could not be so insensible to his own happiness," said sir Charles Felton, who found it necessary to say something for Wentworth, whose vexation at the avowal of his companion was evident in his countenance. "I will seek the runaway," resumed the baronet, looking significantly towards his friend, and departing for the purpose.

"What a very handsome man sir Charles

Felton is!" said a lady, who tapped Miss Macleod on the shoulder with her fan.

"Is that sir Charles Felton?" asked Miss Macleod of our hero.

"The very man, at your service, madam," replied Sidney.

"I rather imagine, sir," said a young man of the party, "that the baronet is not a transferrable property."

"I believe you say right, sir," said Sidney, turning to regard the speaker.

"Mr. Wentworth judges his friend by himself," interjoined lady Linburne; "this would-be epitome of sobriety, my dear Wilmot, has been given to half a thousand fair damsels, whom I could name."

"Hush, my good madam," replied Wentworth, "nor breathe such a sarcasm against your sex; for I swear, I never gave myself, even in thought."

"The ladies will have their way," said Mr. Wilmot; "and, believe me, sir, the regulating patronesses of matrimonial speculations issue their warrants with so much expedition,

expedition, that it is very probable you have unconsciously been acting upon their system."

"What an intolerable creature you are!" said Miss Macleod, tossing up her nose at Mr. Wilmot; "fortunately your taste, like your principles, is well understood. Oh, goodness! see who comes here! lady Anna Arlingham and her aunt. I hope Old Dignity (as I call her father) is of the party."

"Lady Anna is a charming woman," said Wentworth; "and the earl a most unexceptionable character."

"Undoubtedly, as far as honesty can make a man unexceptionable," said lady Linburne; "but, my good sir, is he not the most consequential, overbearing tyrant in existence? I confess I hate the man."

"Then we will not speak of him," said Sidney, "for hatred throws a veil over the judgment."

"Ah, there she comes!" resumed lady Linburne. "Dear creature, her liberality

 is

is immense: really, I wonder she makes that young person so much her equal."

Sidney's eye took the direction of her ladyship's, when Mrs. Marnley, Miss Sidney, and a gentleman, were seen approaching. Wentworth dropped the arm of Miss Macleod; for though Miss Sidney made one of the trio, she was evidently shut out from its personal distinction. The gentleman who attended Mrs. Marnley not deigning to lend his support to the *known* dependant, Sidney rushed forward, and, taking the arm of Miss Sidney, had placed it through his own, without recollecting the recent avowal of sir Charles Felton, or the observations to which his unguarded conduct would subject him. Mrs. Marnley, on whom its effect was almost electric, absolutely lost the power of utterance for a moment; while lady Linburne, and her dear Charlotte, raised their eye-glasses; and though their words were addressed to the mortified widow, their looks were directed at the distinguished child of pover-

ty.

ty. Our hero faced the enemy with a smile, which he purposed should express somewhat of an apology; but ere he had time to *breathe* one, Mr. Wilmot declared, that if *all* deserters could plead so strong a temptation, loyalty would scarcely find a defender.

"It is a point of friendship, sir," said Sidney, and a blush crimsoned his cheek. "I stand here in trust for a friend, to whom I *must* yield my charge in a few minutes."

"I beg, sir, that I may not draw you from your party," said Miss Sidney, in a voice of trepidation; "indeed I do not expect any friend of mine will be here this evening."

"I came with sir Charles Felton," replied Wentworth in a low voice; "and most gladly quit that uninteresting group."

Mrs. Marnley, who saw every thing to crush her hopes in our Englishman, thought proper to assume a more than ordinary gaiety; she turned into the ranks of lady Linburne: thus the party became formid-

able ; and Wentworth, with his fair *protegée*, were, by this manœuvre, placed in front of the cavalcade. The loud laughing, and half-suppressed sarcasms of the ladies, could not fail of reaching the ear of the person at whom they were levelled. If they wounded the unintentional offender, they were no less painful to Wentworth ; and a quick, but poignant, regret stole to his bosom.

"If this creature," thought he, and his eyes intuitively fell on the features of his companion, "if she were disengaged, and I could be certain that myself, and not my fortune, won her favour, how proudly would I lay it at her feet !"

"I am distressed, sir," said Miss Sidney, looking timidly towards our hero ; "I feel that your kindness, your politeness to me, I would say, has destroyed the harmony of your party ; I have no claim to such attention, and really feel uneasy at having occasioned it."

"Poh !" said Sidney, pettishly ; "I joined

ed them from necessity: but here comes my friend."

At this moment sir Charles Felton, lord Osterly, and Mr. Supple, advanced. It was the view he caught of them which caused the testy interjection we have recorded. He could resign his lovely burthen to sir Charles; for if he was accepted, his right was superior: but the idea that they should be compelled to pass the remainder of the evening in this enlarged and unmeaning circle, gave a momentary vexation to the manner of our hero, which surprised his companion, who, withdrawing her arm, seemed to feel that *she* had roused the ungallant and irritable remark.

"I see my happy friend is welcome," said Sidney, regarding the action of Miss Sidney as taking rise in her recognising the baronet.

"What must he think of me?" said the agitated girl.

"I know what he thinks, what he says,"

 replied

replied Wentworth. "I am honoured by his confidence."

"Why did I come!" resumed the trembling girl; "it was unavoidable; yet he cannot understand it, and must despise me."

"Are you ingenuous?" asked Wentworth, looking sceptically; "why should your sex take so much trouble to disguise a feeling which, when so well directed, does you honour?"

Miss Sidney made no reply; but, without solicitation, took the arm of our hero; and at that instant the voice of lord Osterly was heard to exclaim—"What a famous prowl we have had! Ah! my dear aunty, how are you?" and seizing Mrs. Marnley's arm, he proceeded to entertain her with his ramble.

Sir Charles Felton, though relying on the known honour of Sidney, was displeased at finding his goddess walking thus familiarly. Wentworth saw the discomfiture of his

his friend; and resigning the arm he had so willingly supported, he seemed to wait the baronet's address to his mistress.

The evident confusion of Miss Sidney bore a varied interpretation. Wentworth saw in it the liveliest, yet most delicate, proof of the interest his friend held in her heart. Sir Charles beheld in her manner more of alarm than love; yet he placed himself at her side; but, to the astonishment of Sidney, he heard her more than once decline the offered arm of sir Charles.

Supple, whose eagle eye had traced the dependant, and who had, in fact, caused her to dissent from her retired manner, and take the arm of Wentworth—this subtle hypocrite, with an overstrained assiduity, attended to every accent of the overpowered girl, who, thus painfully brought into notice, seemed most acutely to feel the awkwardness of her situation.

Though the party in the rear frequently reminded the van of their being one file, neither Wentworth or sir Charles attended

 to

to their many witticisms. In vain Miss Sidney looked back, and seemed by her looks to claim the suffrage of *some* female in the party; not one was disposed to countenance her. It appears almost unnatural to pourtray, or rather to record, such ungraceful traits of character in women. To say that a thousand thoughtless things are said and done in society, without an intention of wounding, may, in many cases, be truth; but to state the fact, as in the present instance, fairly, it is absolutely necessary to draw comparisons. Do you ever see those whom ye *consider* as your equals subjected to these unfeminine slights? *No!* Would you refuse to the *least* handsome of your sex who was gifted by fortune, would you refuse to countenance even her vices? No! Then as candidly answer my final apostrophe—Can you *forgive* the crime of sense and beauty, where fortune is denied? You will not answer; but you tell the envious tale by every wound you inflict; and however the opinions of the indigent

may

may be ridiculed, however imbecile you may consider their censure, they do retain a power which you must want. They look down upon your mind; they perceive the slight hold to which your rank entitles you, and wonder that the glaring deception does not disgust rather than flatter. I know that men, that is, very fashionable men, who are *always* in leading-strings; such men are the buffoons of *fashionable* ladies; and they smile, and echo, and invent for their patronesses, all those little piquant touches of *cutting* wit against these formidable foils to mere notoriety. Nay, so readily will some men recant what it would honour them to cherish, that I have known instances where, attracted by those externals, charms of person and character, which will actually elicit themselves in spite of poverty—I declare that there are men who, on an intimation (which WOMEN are peculiarly felicitous in giving) of the word *dependance*, wrap themselves up in an *insolent* reserve; or, by a mode infinitely more disgusting,

disgusting, become bold upon such knowledge.

Our hero's mind was not cast in a mould so ductile. Truly independent in himself, he presumed to *think* for himself. He would neither lend his voice or his smiles to the most elevated of his female acquaintance. Yet no cynical asperity marked his manner; his lively raillery frequently producing an effect strongly in favour of lenient measures being the most successful arms against idiotic flippancy.

The evening to which our story refers awakened in the bosom of Wentworth not only sympathy, but a new and no less powerful feeling; and while he remained in doubt whether sir Charles Felton was an accepted or a rejected lover, his natural talent at observation led him to watch each look and accent of his fair enslaver, till all the repinings of a disappointed heart lent their influence to torture him.

Sir Charles, vexed at the receding manner of Miss Sidney, looked consciously proud

proud of *his* claim to her favour. In vain he endeavoured to be gay. Neither the many kind nothings of Miss Macleod, or the vulpine eloquence of Supple, could charm his disturbed mind; that amiable equanimity, which made him so justly dear to our hero, seemed to have forsaken him; and his replies, more especially to Sidney, were hasty, and somewhat resentful.

"Lady Anna looks very lovely to-night," said Wentworth.

"She always looks so," replied sir Charles; "but she is under a cloud at present. Lord Arlingham is moody, I perceive."

"You never spare your noble relation, Felton; and I verily believe that he might be thawed into conciliation, if you would take the trouble to try him."

"I would as soon undertake a voyage to Nova Zembla, as attempt such a hopeless expedient," resumed sir Charles.

At this moment lady Anna tapped the baronet on the shoulder with her fan.

"One

"One word, sir Charles," said her ladyship.

Sir Charles attended her mandate, and Supple, taking *his* place, continued walking by Miss Sidney. Wentworth disliked the association; yet, recollecting the words of lord Osterly, who had said that Supple knew Miss Sidney, he watched, with eagle eye, to perceive what degree of intimacy subsisted between them. The experienced hypocrite, whose adroitness surpassed even the sagacity of our hero, had addressed the exposed dependant in a voice unintelligible to Wentworth; when, to his delight and surprise, the animated girl replied—"To me, sir, this apology is unnecessary. Your conclusion was fallacious. I have told you where to make your concessions; yet I know not that they would be valued, or are desired."

"This charming warmth," retorted Supple, "is most engagingly suspicious. My good young lady, believe me, there is no fairer sight for *male* vanity than *female* anger. Women are rarely roused to exhibit resentment,

resentment, where their feelings are not strongly interested."

"Then you take no account of offended pride, sir?" replied Miss Sidney.

"Pride!" echoed Supple, staring boldly in the face of his reprover; "upon my honour," and he smiled sententiously, "I had not reckoned upon its existence in the present case."

"Presuming man!" she would have added; but turning from the ironical gaze of the arch miscreant, in a voice half faltering, she continued—"I wish Mrs. Marnley would go home; or——

"Or what?" said Wentworth, drawing the fair outcast yet nearer to his heart, for her arm had unresistingly been placed within that of our hero.

"That some *lady* of the party honoured me by her countenance," resumed Miss Sidney.

"Unfeminine beings!" muttered Wentworth, internally.—"I will introduce you to an amiable woman; one to whom you

may

may own affinity, if you purpose to make my friend happy;" and leading the half reluctant girl forward, he introduced Miss Sidney to lady Anna Arlingham.

Her ladyship received the overture with infinite grace. Lady Morbury, who accompanied her niece, regarded the fair stranger with an eye of curiosity, yet wholly distinct from pride. Sir Charles appeared pleased at a coincidence which he trusted would facilitate his wishes; and in the hope of attaining an object so near to his heart, he condescended to join in a political discussion, which the peer was arguing with a nobleman high in office. For it should be observed, lord Arlingham was considered as perfectly invulnerable to female attractions; and indeed the air and movement of his lordship was eminently calculated to sanction such a belief, his head being always elevated to a degree that admitted not of mere terrestrial observation, though no man had ever hinted that his lordship was addicted to celestial contemplation.

Mrs.

Mrs. Marnley, though affecting an ease which she purposed should deceive her companions, was really a stranger to the feeling. She beheld, with proud resentment, those little courtesies bestowed upon her inferior, which she ever wished to attain for herself. Yet it never once occurred to her, that a consistent urbanity on her part had spared her a mortification so painful, as that of beholding the man she preferred anxiously assiduous to make the friendless dependant conspicuous.

In vain lady Linburne reprobated the presumption of Miss Sidney, in suffering herself to be introduced. Mrs. Marnley heard not the remark; for just then, lady Anna spoke *en passant*; and Wentworth, with a provoking smile, begged the pouting widow "to apprize him when she meant to retire, and he would have the pleasure of restoring Miss Sidney to her care."

"How excessively eccentric that creature is!" said Miss Macleod; "he actually seeks occasion to place his most trivial actions

tions in a striking point of view. I am deceived, however, if lord Arlingham will thank him for levelling HIM with one knows not who."

"Exactly so," whispered Supple. "Unfortunately the person and deportment of this young woman is calculated to deceive; but I beg to be exonerated from any insidious motive in my remark."

"Do you know her?" asked the greedy detractor.

"Why no; that is, she is no acquaintance of mine; but her connexions, and a certain mystery which she affects, leaves wide room for conjecture."

"I hate mystery," replied Miss Macleod; "and, pardon me, sir, if you know any thing to her disadvantage, I must consider you very ungenerous in not guarding my amiable friend Mrs. Marnley of her danger. Consider the extreme delicacy of her situation—her youth, her beauty."

"It is delightful to hear such liberal sentiments from so fair an advocate," resumed

med Supple. "I, my good young lady, am the last man in the world who would breathe a censure upon mere report. An engagement, from which I cannot absolve myself, will take me from London to-morrow. In the interim, your lively friendship may suggest a method of advising with Mrs. Marnley to question this young woman, whose effrontery must be truly extraordinay, if she does not corroborate my idea of her real character."

"You are very good," said the delighted confident; "rely upon my caution. My poor friend will, I am assured, feel truly grateful for an intervention so fortunate."

"May I request that my name may not be mentioned?" continued Supple.

"Oh, certainly; I will be particularly guarded; and indeed the sensibility of my deceived friend is such, that I really tremble for the consequences. Can you tell me, sir, if there is any truth in the report of Mr. Wentworth's attachment to Mrs. Marnley?"

"Mr. Wentworth is a very repulsive sort of

of character," resumed Supple. "He is a compound of pride and affected sentiment —his vanity, which, forgive me if I add, the ladies have lavishly contributed to increase, leads him to DICTATE where he should be an *auditor*. I do not know of any FIXED attachment that he owns; yet I should not wonder if his worthy father was doomed to experience much uneasiness from his wayward temper; and if the young woman he is now walking with was *unmarried*, he would be as likely to address her as any woman; not because she has any *very* superior claim to distinction, but because the decision would be ridiculous."

"Is she a married woman?"

"Mind, I do not positively assert this, my dear madam; but you can take it into your EXAMINATION."

"A thousand thanks, sir," said Miss Macleod. "It is beyond a doubt she must be an improper person. What woman would disown a husband, who——"

"Disown a husband!" replied lord Osterly.

terly.—"My dear Miss Macleod, you would not be so ungenerous. No, I am sure you wish—I mean, you INTEND to marry."

"Indeed I don't know, my lord; you are horrible creatures: the fewer one praises the better. But you have interrupted me. If the man can support her, how ridiculour not to make him do it!" she continued, turning to Supple. "What is he?"

"A mere adventurer, living upon money accommodation."

"Why, as to that, sir, you know many *honourable* characters are forced to resort to such measures at times; but then, to be sure, there are ostensible reserves which sanction the temporary convenience."

"Undoubtedly, madam; but the case in question owns no such palliation."

Again lord Osterly decamped, but was almost instantly recognised in a box, occupied by a party whose characters required no elucidation.

Wentworth saw the unblushing peer; and as he turned in disgust from a contemplation

plation so inimical to decorum, the sister of his interesting applicant rose in his mind, and he resolved upon speaking to his lordship, if possible, before they separated for the night.

Sir Charles Felton, whose generous nature had owned sensible disappointment in the reserved manner of his mistress, endeavoured to forego his more tender feelings, and, by a liberality which did him honour, strove anxiously to impress the worth of the fair dependant upon the mind of lady Morbury and his cousin. The ladies *more* than met his views; and she who had been slighted and almost rejected by the mushroom party of Mrs. Marnley, found, in the truly exalted females with whom she was associated, all that conciliation of manner which *should* distinguish superior birth.

There is not, perhaps, a more mistaken idea, than that condescension diminishes respect. "Familiarity is said to breed contempt." With vulgar minds, the fact may

be

be self-evident; but where the gradations take rise in urbanity, and continue from a conviction that the judgment has not erred, I am persuaded, though the exalted party would *level* the disparity, the obliged will *retain* that delicate consciousness which, while it values the sympathetic generosity of the disinterested friend, enhances the respect ever due to true greatness.

Miss Sidney, who had been depressed even to melancholy on her first entrance into the gardens, owned all the efficacy of this gracious charm of character in her noble patronesses. Encouraged by their smiles and converse, she appeared to lose sight of her former self; and though a mild demeanour seemed forcibly to speak that she owned an inferiority in rank, her language, at once polished and easy, gave proof that intellectually she was their equal.

Lady Anna, in a half whisper, said something relative to the love of sir Charles. Miss Sidney looked embarrassed; and glancing towards Wentworth, by a motion,

seemed to request her ladyship's forbearance.

"Only say—'to be or not to be," said her ladyship, smiling.

"It cannot be," replied Miss Sidney, in a low voice, yet not so low but our hero caught the sound.

His heart owned a sensible pulsation at a negative so decisive; yet it was possible to translate it variously; and, as bearing reference to Supple's inuendoes, might imply a pre-engagement. However, as "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," he could not entirely shut his heart against the soft intruder. Frequently, during this evening, had he internally reprobated the seeming treason of his manner towards his friend; yet why would sir Charles hold back? "Is this timidity the sure criterion of a refined passion, or does despair mix in the evident chagrin of my friend?" said Wentworth, mentally: "it is undoubtedly a most interesting moment to a lover—his fate in her hands; and if he

traces

traces not some semblances of encouragement, I can understand that his mind must be sensibly disturbed."

While this cursory statement between love and friendship occupied the bosom of Sidney, the baronet, by an invitation from his fair cousin, had fallen into the line, and now walked between lady Anna and Miss Sidney. Compassion was the sole motive of her ladyship. "She felt persecution, and had learned mercy." Sir Charles availed himself of the golden opportunity; and Wentworth, without an intention of attending to the conversation, was necessarily compelled to hear it in part.

To a question which appeared to own much interest, Miss Sidney, in a low voice, replied, "that she trusted sir Charles would do justice to her principles, and believe her sensible to the liberality of his proposal."

A hectic flush passed over the cheek of our hero; and now, had the whole world

stood in array, to elucidate the crime of listening, his surprised heart would have rejected the well-founded odium. Nature superseded the customary and *correct* observances of society; and in breathless expectation, he awaited the succeeding remark of sir Charles. "And am I to consider the decision as irrevocable?" said he.

Miss Sidney curtsied an assent; "and entreated sir Charles to reflect, that lady Anna had called him thither to ask his advice."

"Lady Anna is a dear warm-hearted girl," said the baronet, with a look half reproachful; "come, my sweet coz, what is the subject?"

"Really I have forgotten," said her ladyship.—"Oh no, now I recollect. Pray do you think you could promise to behave well for a month? If so, I invite you to go to Westbourne Castle. Yes, positively my lord has resolved to take us thither. I am almost dying with *ennui* at the idea; not that I ever saw the place, but I hear it

is

is in a state of dilapidation. There is no neighbourhood near, though the country is reckoned beautifully romantic. But how shall I bear it? Do go, my dear Charles; you will help us to laugh the time away."

Miss Sidney startled at the intelligence; and, leaning forward, she asked "if such a residence would be safe without much preparatory caution?"

"Oh, papa has already sent down the workmen to frighten the rooks, and some of the servants have taken their departure."

An unconscious sigh heaved the bosom of Miss Sidney.

Our hero, while he contemplated the features of his companion, owned a feeling, which I believe to be indigenous to an Englishman; for though there are to be found a few romantic beings whom the marvellous delights, generally speaking, an Englishman shrinks from mystery. The solidity of his understanding qualifies him to detect imposition; he is an analyst in minute as in important matters; and as habitual

habitual reflection produces justness of ideas, he becomes indescribably acute in his conclusions.

Now whether Wentworth applied his reasoning faculties, in the present case, with leniency or otherwise, we can scarcely record; for though he had certainly looked with searching eye into the countenance of Miss Sidney, and had expressed by that look his wonder why the mention of Westbourne Castle could affect her, there was no time for trying the cause impartially.

Mrs. Marnley and her party, in a half-careless way, signifying their intention of departing, Miss Sidney expressed her thanks to lady Morbury and her niece, and was curtseying to our hero, when lord Osterly rushed across the path—"Hallo! are you going?" said he. "Ah! lady Anna, how are you?"

"Not to-night, my lord," interrupted lord Arlingham, stepping forward. "Not to-night," and he waved his hand for the dashing peer to retire.

Our

Our hero, seizing the arm of lord Osterly, drew him away.

"Poh! what ails you, Wentworth?" said his lordship; "I wanted to take a look at that girl who lives with my prety aunt."

The avowal of his lordship determined our hero; and Supple, who, with affected regrets, now joined them, helped to support the inebriated libertine.

"What an odious appearance!" said Wentworth, looking sternly upon the wily mentor. "If lord Osterly's carriage waits, you had better order it round, sir;—or, stay; you take charge of my lord, and I will gladly relinquish my disgraceful association."

"Mercy! mercy! Mr. Wentworth," said Supple. "Who of us is infallible?"

"Speak rather of decency than mercy," rejoined Sidney.

"We are in an awkward dilemma, sir," replied Supple. "My lord came in his wherry, purposing to walk home, as it is moonlight."

"He cannot walk now, sir; give him your

your arm, and I will see if there is a hack to be got ;" and resigning the unconscious peer, he hastened out of the gardens.

Sir Charles Felton, on learning the errand of Sidney, aided his purpose ; and after seeing the degraded peer and his vile associate shut up in their leathern vehicle, took their departure for town.

The baronet was gloomy and reserved, nor did Sidney hear how the fair dependant, had been disposed of amongst the offended party.

The non-appearance of Mr. Carberry, after his morning's avowal of visiting Vauxhall, gave Wentworth a subject for conversation : he spoke of the young merchant, in terms appropriate, though flattering.

Sir Charles corroborated the panegyric, by declaring " there was not a more amiable or disinterested fellow upon earth. I must see him in the morning ; his absence to-night is unaccountable. I hope we are not both greatly deceived."

" I thought

"I thought you spoke his eulogium just now," said our hero.

"Undoubtedly," replied sir Charles; "nor is any praise too much, as applied to Carberry. I was reflecting upon a subject in which his generous friendship has stood proudly manifest. I only hope that we have not equally been misled."

A confused idea of Durweston's connexion with Miss Sidney struck the mind of Wentworth; and had not the evident chagrin of his friend repressed all selfish feeling, he would have sought to discover if his conjecture was well founded. From cogitations to which each succeeding thought gave credibility, the abstracted friends were aroused by a vehement shouting; and in the next moment the carriage stopped. Wentworth lowered the glass to learn the cause, when the voice of lord Osterly vociferated—"Quiz me, Wentworth, if I don't whisk my jarvey to Westminster-bridge, and distance your ambling steeds."

"Go home peaceably," replied Wentworth;

worth; "I am not disposed to rival you, my lord; this carriage is not mine, and if it were, I should equally reject your proposal."

"You are a neat one," replied my lord; "that's right, I owe you a rowing."

"Go on," interrupted sir Charles Felton, imperiously; "are we to be detained here all night by this madman?"

Lord Osterly uttered threats of the most murderous import, which were, however, lost on those for whom they were intended. The coachman, obeying the order of his master, left the mortified peer to vent his rage on his companion.

"That plastic booby will not stop at mere folly," said the baronet; "nothing but downright profligacy will content him. Has he no male relative who can restrain his vices?"

"I believe not," replied Sidney; "his youth was passed under peculiarly rigid restrictions, as far as regards liberty of action; his mind I never understood to be a

cultivated

cultivated one; thus his emancipation has intoxicated him; freedom acts upon his nature as liberty would upon an encaged animal—he cannot bask in the limits which his independance gives him, but, treacherous to himself, runs into every excess, and will eventually fall a victim to his unlicenced criminalities."

"I can smile, I do smile, at the eccentric whims which our sex so easily adopt," resumed sir Charles. "Nay, I am of opinion, that men, from twenty to three or four and twenty, are infinitely more addicted to fashions, and own more personal vanity, than is attributed to them. I am persuaded, however, that it dies away, and that many an apparent puppy, in the course of time, becomes a very rational being. I am not so sanguine with respect to a libertine. The impurity of his mind militates against mild argument. You cannot convince him while he is successful. He is not to be laughed out of his vices; nor is our friendship sufficiently animated,

in these cases, to lead us to persevere where the association is so degrading: for however the world might reject my assertion, Wentworth, though they should term me a male prude, I vow to Heaven, that a human creature, whose licentiousness called a blush into my cheek, whether man or woman, could never engage more than my compassion. I might, I would serve; but to give my time to them, to be classed with them, by suffering their crimes to bear a lenient rather than an appropriate appellation, to such a wilful mockery I never will submit."

"I coincide in your opinion," said Sidney; "yet I must apprize you I am in a manner compelled to meet the thoughtless mortal in question; not in the hope of effecting any permanent improvement in him, but if I can bring him to perform one act of common humanity, I shall not regret the time it occupies."

"It is a hopeless attempt," replied sir Charles, as the carriage stopped at the door of

of our hero. "Adieu!" added he; "*I* go to read my mittimus;" and throwing himself back in the carriage, it drove off before Wentworth could reply to the remark.

"Then she has written to him," said Sidney, as he took the way to his chamber. "Felton, I can conceive your disappointment; yet she has said that *principle* dictated her decision; and it may, very justly," continued he. "Yes, thus did Anna Tracey!" and again the coincidence we have before hinted glanced over his mind. "This suspense, this ambiguity, shall not last long. I will await Durweston's answer; and if that is indefinite, I will appeal to Miss Sidney herself. Sidney!" repeated our hero; "the name contradicts my suspicion;" and more than ever perplexed by the intricacy of all that related to his most anxious wishes, he sought that repose which the restless ever seek, but which seldom sooths their pillow.

The

The morning, to a mind pre-occupied by plans, is a welcome guest. Sidney saw its rosy beams stream through the apartment with a heart grateful for its approach, and, if we may be allowed to enlarge, we might add, that reflection which the bounty of finite wisdom has so graciously bestowed upon rational creatures; this efficient mediator between thought and action, without more of vanity than the virtuous may honestly take to himself, reconciled the past with the present in the mind of our hero.

To tell the fashionable world that a man in exalted life "communed with his heart in his chamber," may, perhaps, appear a solecism beyond the apprehension of the many. Yet I am not dismayed. Poetically, you have read of the "beauty of holiness;" and why should you reject it practically? It is presumptuous, we know, to strike the breast, and thank your God, like the publican in sacred writ; but impartially to look back with tranquillity,

and,

and, without comparison, prove the heart, is an act consistent with our faith, and, it may therefore be presumed, acceptable to the God who ordained that faith.

The lassitude which succeeds every species of nocturnal indulgence, produced in Wentworth those reveries to which the preceding remarks bear reference; and as he paused upon the disordered system, and contrasted the usefulness of a retired life with the unmeaning routine in which he was engaged, a strong feeling of recrimination touched his bosom. "I do not disown that novelty has its charms," sighed he; "that we are in a manner trepanned into engagements, and become actors in scenes which we had not previously imagined to be probable. "Vice is a many-headed monster."—Folly is her imitative child. Then it is necessary to quit the entangled sphere, ere the arch-despot unites us to her family. Marriage, a happy *disinterested* union, is the epoch to which my domestic heart looks with delight—to find

a woman possessed of delicacy without affectation—candid without boldness—intellectual without pedantry. She *must* be *feminine*," continued the musing lover, "and that abrogates every ungracious trait; it is the charm of charms—the never-dying fragrance of beauty. For though age might mellow her *personal* graces, the calmness of the decline would blunt the arrows of the tyrant. Thou garish orb," continued the enthusiast, " orient as thou art, bright and effulgent as are thy beams, I worship thee as the source of light, the gift of an all-seeing and all-perfect Deity; but thou secondary luminary, mild queen of night! it is thy soft influence which awakens the soul of sensibility; to thee how doth the voice of complaint ascend! and though thou chearest and can enliven the silver circlet of the heavens, it is the chastened beam of modesty, the bright emblem of woman, obscured for awhile, again shining forth with a mild, yet majestic lustre!"

Heroics are so usual with lovers, that I make

make no apology for presenting my hero in a mood so natural to the passion; yet I can assure my readers, that with all Mr. Wentworth's partiality for madam Luna, he did not disdain to meet the beams of Phœbus; but, on the contrary, was seated at breakfast in his drawing-room, which overlooked the park, before ten o'clock. I would not picture too much of comfort in a *bachelor's* residence; for, if they *are* intellectual, I rank them as the worst sort of misers —if they are triflers, their home, like themselves, is too evanescent to own a likeness; but were I to dissent from my premised objection, the sketch would really appear to own some attraction;—a room, rather usefully than superficially furnished; a large veranda, half shaded by Venetian blinds; the balcony filled with flowers, made doubly fragrant by the stealing breath of morn; a breakfast-table laid with elegance; and, to conclude my description, the fine person of our hero, leaning gracefully over a volume on which his mind was intent—here ends

ends the delectable part of the exhibition—he was alone; and if the page engaged his attention, the tea-urn could not enter into the compact; it *had* boiled most sonorously; it had now ceased to boil.

"Tush!" said Wentworth, as the churlish singer became mute; "this could not happen, if a creature interested in my comfort graced my table. Yet I am giving to woman a very insignificant place in my regards, if my *personal* inconvenience alone suggests the want. Is it thus? or am I not *now* more than ever alive to the charms of domestic life? It is a true bill," sighed our hero, sipping his unpalatable beverage. "Yes, if such a woman as the fair dependant presided here," and he glanced towards the vacant space, "her affection eliciting itself in the most simple duties, her language charming my ear, or her attention claiming my gratitude; this is the bliss for which I sigh. I will ascertain my right to pursue an object so dear to my heart; and if I find not a hope

of

of success, I will retire to Adderfield; there, at least, I shall enjoy the society I so highly prize."

Philip, who had attended the summons of the bell, while clearing the breakfast-table, took occasion to thank his master for his kindness to his uncle.

"Don't mention it," said Sidney; "I only wish I had earlier known my assistance could be of use."

"Why, till lately, sir," replied Philip, "my uncle did very well; but he has good friends, and they do not treat him like a servant."

"I thought he was a soldier," resumed our hero.

"So he was, sir, but he is invalided. Yes, my uncle has seen a great deal of service, and his officers always shewed him great kindness; but he had the misfortune to see his two best friends die in the field; though I must say, that their families have protected him ever since; and not only him, but his children."

"It

"It does them honour," said Wentworth. "I rejoice to hear that so much gratitude exists among the rich."

"As for riches, sir," resumed Philip, "I fear they have very little to boast of, which makes their goodness greater; but I verily believe that my uncle's young master, as he calls him, would share his last penny with him. Oh, sir, if you had seen him when a great trouble overtook my uncle, how he went into the country to try to do him a service, which he did indeed; but it has not turned to any great account since, for"—just then the door opened, and Hall announced lord Osterly.

Philip seized the loaded tray; and as he passed the libertine lord, Wentworth almost thought he perceived an *intentional* impediment thrown in the way of his lordship's entrance. In any other case, the action would have deserved reprehension; but in this Wentworth reasoned for his servant, not as his servant, but as a MAN. "It must be a grievous pang!" thought he, "to

meet

meet the creature who upholds our kindred in growing guilt."

"Wentworth," said lord Osterly, "I want Felton's address; I am determined on trying his Irish courage."

"Poh! nonsense—I really cannot attend to your request. Let me ask you to be serious for a moment, my lord; I wish to try your English humanity. Did you remark the young man who passed you just now?"

"Not I; I only felt the inconvenience of his awkwardness; he had nearly thrown me off my legs."

"I believe he intended to do so," said our hero.

"Sir!" replied lord Osterly, "do you second an insult of this nature?"

"I think it so perfectly in nature," resumed Sidney, "that I dare not disown my sentiments. You have injured, nay, you continue to injure his family, by making his cousin your mistress. You have seen him before, I am aware. Had you been

been in a disposition to attend to me last night, I had fully resolved upon naming the subject to you. Will you allow me to do so now?"

"Positively, Wentworth, I take credit to myself for the excessive forbearance I observe with you. The case in point, however, would, least of all others, claim my attention. I have made up my mind, and am not to be turned from my purpose."

"On what principle do you reconcile your feelings in the present instance, my lord?"

"I am satisfied with myself," replied the offended lord, "and in nowise accountable to Mr. Wentworth."

"Perhaps not," resumed our hero; "but forgive me if I press the subject yet a little further. Can you, my lord, persist in an error which causes so much anguish to an honest family, and reflects no particle of honour upon yourself? Love is out of the question. I believe it rarely happens, that the woman whom a man has *himself* rendered

rendered infamous, retains a *permanent* hold upon his affections. A modern poet has apostrophized my remark with much pathos—

> "Oh! why should man's success remove
> The very charms that wake his love?"

If, in a case which justly claims our *honour*, such defalcations are daily observable, allow me to add, that a connexion like that to which I allude admits no expectation of its being other than a transient one."

"Until I prove it such," replied lord Osterly, "you will allow me to act for myself."

"You do not answer me," resumed Sidney. "You cannot justify your conduct, my lord. I will not believe you insensible to the many miseries which claim the sympathy of the rich. I have known you to be generous. Why do you disdain an act of retributive justice?"

"I am bound in honour to protect her. I consider her as my property. In short, I

saw

saw her—took a fancy to her—and attained her."

"Would you carry the same train of argument into any other act of your life, my lord, to what would it amount but rank dishonesty? For instance; suppose you preferred my watch to any other you had seen, and if, by unlawful means, you got possession of it, what does this argue in your favour? By what part of your code of honour would you settle this?"

"Do you compare me with a robber, sir? Is this the sort of language to which a man of honour can listen?"

"Honour!" echoed Wentworth; "the word is out of place. The bare suggestion of *personal* degradation offends your pride, yet the most glaring *moral* lapse excites no compunction in your bosom. I have said more than *our* acquaintance, perhaps, justifies; yet I stand acquitted to myself in the sincerity of my motive. You are not singular, my lord, in the instance to which I refer. Unfortunately, it is so usual for

men

men to select some miserable being on whom their transient favour is lavished, and who is suddenly cast from their protection, frequently without the *means* of living guiltless. You will naturally ask why my zeal is thus excited for the female in question. I have said that she is the cousin of my servant, a young man whom I value highly; she has a sister, who suffers much anguish of mind in the disgrace which attaches to the lost Maria; and her father, an old soldier, my lord, a man accustomed to rate *honour* at a fairer valuation than those in his rank of life generally do. Take this into your consideration. Give up the old man's daughter; and, by settling a *small* pittance on her remaining days, give her the power of turning them to a happier account."

"The very Grandison of the day!" said lord Osterly, bursting into a loud laugh.—"Upon my soul, Wentworth, I thought you were going to marry me off to the soldier's daughter."

"I would not give a woman of *her* description to be the wife of any man," resumed Sidney. "Nothing can be more erroneous, less consistent with the *purity* of wedded love, than that false idea of giving worth to infamy, by the mere force of gold. No, my lord, I would never give my voice to a bargain so gross. I *hope* to live in a circle, and to be blessed with the power of exercising my judgment in cases of this sort. To encourage marriage amongst my tenantry, will not only be a moral, but a political consideration. But when I lend my name to sanction a disparity so vile—or should I ever learn that the veriest clod on my estate meditated a sacrifice so degrading, I would exert myself to guard him, to warn him of his danger; yet, while I did this, believe me, I would not neglect the fair impostor, nor thwart her intents, save when she aspired, as I have said, to fill that place in society which *should* be sacred to the virtuous of her sex."

"A very

" A very pretty theory, truly, Mr. Wentworth! I should fear to trust myself in your immaculate village. Let me see, thou perfect piece of mortality! how far your system holds good. Old Firmor is your Dr. Bartlet; I am your *wicked* cousin Grandison, who have not yet found my widow; poor Supple is a Bagnal; but where is your Harriet—your sweet Miss Byron? Come tell me, where is this paragon?"

" You are straying from the subject, my lord. I neither seek, nor would wish to find a Miss Byron. It is not necessary to look into fiction for female models. There are many who grace the present era; I wish that my own sex were worthy of them."

" Have the goodness to tell me where these masterpieces of nature are to be found," said lord Osterly; " for, I swear, I know them not."

" Our tastes are different," replied Wentworth. " I perhaps discover excellencies where you do not imagine they could exist;

ist; and, *vice versa,* it is probable I overlook those whom you consider perfect."

"Your usual eccentricity certainly gives weight to your assertion; but I perceive, in this highly *lenient* defence of woman, an evident predilection—an opinion given rather to *strengthen* a defalcation at which your pride stumbles, while your passion leads you on.—Ah! Wentworth, you look guilty—be honest. It has been hinted to *me,* this morning, that *married* Miss, the fair impostor in Grosvenor-street, she has been playing off her sentimental airs upon your unguarded heart; but, remember, *her cara sposa* is a man of high courage, though a pauper in point of fortune."

"I did not understand that Miss Sidney was a married woman," resumed Wentworth, and his colour mounted as he spoke. "You allude to her, my lord, therefore I do not affect to misunderstand you. I shall not attempt to defend your pleasantry. No man need blush at admiring an amiable, interesting woman; and as I can trace the

source

source from which your suspicions are derived, they require no reply. But may I hope that you will restore the unhappy girl of whom we were speaking? Let me suggest to you a plan, which must give you much internal satisfaction. Suppose my Philip was to proceed to Brighton, authorized by a note from yourself, to bring the wretched fugitive home, if she assents?"

"I cannot consent to it," said his lordship. "No! the fellow, in an interview I had with him, evinced much courage, and some sense; he would frighten her into compliance; and I should be devilishly vexed to part with her just now."

"What can excuse such wilful, such premeditated folly?" continued Sidney. "You allow that she will but transiently retain your favour, yet you will not abridge her guilt. Let me entreat you to attend to my proposal."

"Poh! the thing is impossible. I have promised her a settlement, and I cannot keep my word yet."

"I will pay her board *with* her father, if he can receive her, or place her at his pleasure, therefore your dilemma is obviated," replied our hero.

"My good sir Charles, your *philanthropy* is admirable—that is, if one could divest it of its suspicious qualities. The girl is handsome, and I know you have a *taste* for *unprotected* beauty; but beware, Wentworth, the ambition of these humble creatures is immense. Once raise them to your own rank, legally or otherwise, they become the veriest tyrants in existence."

"My lord," said Sidney hastily, "I beseech of you to desist; this levity is indecorous, it is vile: there can be no comparison between the parties you have so cruelly classed."

"Take comfort, Wentworth," replied his lordship. "My aunt's *protegée* is married, as I have said; and your prospect of success is infinitely more promising."

"I have no plans, no designs, sir. You have converted my simple admiration to your

your own impure system of morality. If the female in question is a wife, she doubly claims our respect. The public are in some measure answerable for an engagement made in their presence; and we may say, that the honour of a virtuous woman is under the special protection of all good people."

"I have done," said my lord; "I will not pursue the subject; but I am resolved upon watching you narrowly; either you have 'turned from your evil ways,' or are the most consummate hypocrite under the heavens."

"I give you leave to make your decision," resumed Wentworth, coldly.

"You have not told me where Felton puts up," said lord Osterly.

"He is at Ibbetson's at present, my lord. I advise you not to follow him with wrath; he is not a fighting man, though truly courageous; of course, the chances are against you; nor do I understand in what he has offended you."

"Do

"Do you think I fear him?" exclaimed the enraged peer. "I should like nothing better than to shiver a lance with him. I am a famous hand at fencing; my eye is wonderfully keen; or I would meet him 'muzzle to muzzle,' if he prefers it."

"This will end *peaceably*, I perceive," said Sidney, smiling; "you are only enacting a late farce. Felton is too much a man of character to give unprovoked cause for offence; and if you took umbrage at his calling you a madman last night, what will you say to one who declares he thinks it was generous to term you so? Why not direct your resentment at lord Arlingham? he gave you a very convincing, though just proof, that he did not consider you fit for the society of ladies."

"Quiz me if that is not well suggested!" I remember now, he was devilish impertinent. Upon my soul, I have a great mind to demand an apology, which, if he refuses, I will challenge him."

"Rather make your bow in Grosvenor-square,

square, and offer one," said Wentworth. "You know lord Arlingham is, strictly speaking, a man of nice honour, and will probably make you feel an inferiority you might avoid by a timely concession."

"I am not ambitious of his good opinion," resumed the peer; "and as I am on the wing for Brighton, the old don's pride will be cooled by the time I return. Have you any further strictures to offer, my kind Mentor?"

"None, since my interference with regard to your female victim is fruitless."

"Then adieu for a few weeks!" replied lord Osterly. "Honour, however you may smile, Wentworth, honour binds me to protect the poor girl. She is attached to me; I know it. All your eloquence would fail to draw her from me. *Entre nous*, don't touch the bell; I cannot bear to meet that presuming dog, her cousin—I can find my way out."

"*Honour* gives place to a feeling of less doubtful origin," said our hero. "Your *conscience*

conscience will not let you face the man whom you are so cruelly injuring. Be just," continued Wentworth, detaining his visitor.

"*Pardonez moi;* not now, perhaps in a few months I shall voluntarily fall into your wishes; till then, suffer me to act for myself."

"And even then, *you* will find some plea in your *honourable* code, that shall reconcile your conduct."

"Undoubtedly," replied his lordship. "Humanity dictates, that she who has worn our love should not remain to feel our scorn;" and, with a self-assured air, the libertine withdrew.

"Woman!" said the sympathizing Wentworth, as the door closed upon his lordship, "defenceless, trusting woman! poor is thy security in the *honour* of man! Virtue alone can hold the heart of man. It may be, and I fear it is, an enforced slavery with many; but ye have the blissful reserve in your own spotless mind. The

very

very sorrows of a virtuous woman enhance her worth; but for the fallen, the contemned child of error, pity may lead us to stem our tears; generosity induce us to alleviate her grief, by giving her the power to be honest. Yet, what a mournful contemplation is a woman lost to honour! what a speck upon that horizon whose line was formed in perfection! May I never cease to own your claims to my consideration, thou fair 'pageants of an hour!' but may Heaven give to me, not only the partner of my terrestrial scene, but one whom my emulative soul might fondly hope to meet in realms of everlasting life!"

END OF VOL. II.

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